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Queerform/ing

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Queerform/ing

by

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Abstract

My artwork is situated within and around vessels and the Queer Homoerotic World and explores sexuality as a Demisexual within them. This is accomplished through the two processes of my creation, Minivague and Queerform/ing: balancing sexual tension and explicit expression, while subverting traditional norms and stereotypes with queerness to distance oneself from stereotypical Gay Art. Altering/emphasizing makes the artwork more romantic, lighter, whimsical, softer, and tender than the figure/s and the situations actually are. The process is also emphasizing what one sees or wants to be seen. The *Pink Boy* becomes a celebration of intimacy of any form. I discuss ambiguity and the move toward queer surfaces. They are emphasizing and elevating the moment and memory to show and extend beyond the confines of conformity. Twisting, zooming, adding, subtracting, and Minivaguing elements are moving beyond conformity—beyond the conformity of memory and surfaces.
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Queergenesis (Introduction)

The Queer Homoerotic World, the world that I created, flows and weaves along its gravity. This world is my way of containing the four vessels within it. This living multifaceted world changes with time—as the threads of the other vessels and the relationship between them change. The World itself is not a thing of conformity—it exists in its’ own mixed, everchanging conformity—evolving. It is a world to celebrate, explore, discover, and push intimacy. There are four vessels:

1. Pink Boys: significant due to them being the main inner vessel and muse in which I work.
2. Balloons: They are mischievous, naughty, sexual, playful, and invasive. States of Balloon (vessel): as a healing (even before getting fascinated with balloons), learning, and self-discovery. It exists in equivocal materiality—not needing to conform to what is considered a Balloon.
3. Sculpture
4. Poetry (text).

In the realm of Queer Homoerotic, the traditional paradigms of homoerotic aesthetics are not only challenged but also transformed. This art form leverages queerness as a proactive lens to critique and reimagine the norms of sexuality and identity, intertwining deeply personal experiences with broader societal and political issues. It is within this context that the 'Queer Homoerotic World' emerges—a dynamic, ever-evolving space where these narratives unfold, offering new perspectives on intimacy, identity, and resistance.

Within this Queer Homoerotic World, the 'Pink Boys' emerge not merely as subjects but as pivotal vessels. They carry within them the collective stories and emotions of the queer community, each figure narrating aspects of queer life with profound authenticity and depth. These characters embody the resistance and liberation central to the queer experience, their very forms challenging conventional narratives and inviting viewers to explore the rich, complex stories they hold.

Pink Boys originally were pink male figures—this is now a hindrance to further play and exploration. I was making Pink Boys conform to a specific thing—pink. Meanwhile conforming it to just pink with no variations within the pink. Why strictly conform and hinder the Pink Boys to just one thing—pink? A figure does not have to be pink; they can always tie together conceptually if they don’t seem so visually. The same applies to surfaces. The past rules, now shattered after a year into my studio practice, were limitations holding me back. The Pink Boys are proud to be themselves and experience life—they are a reclamation of intimacy and the love of one’s body, including love for homosocial. They are a tender vessel of intimacy and queerness, combining elements of sensuality, reclamation, and ambiguity.

The world and the Pink Boys (depictions of male figures) are a way for me to do these explorations while exploring sexuality as a Demisexual1.

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1 Demisextuality: is a sexual orientation in which a person feels sexually attracted to someone only after they've developed a close emotional bond with them. Forming a bond doesn't guarantee a person will feel a sexual attraction, but the bond is needed before sexual activity is even possible. Demisextuality, where deep emotional bonds precede physical or sexual attraction.
Process, Terms, and Definitions

The first process/term of my creation is Minivague, which has formally replaced 'Fudge,' an earlier informal term. The breakdown of the term Minivague:

- "Mini": Reflecting the minimal or bare minimum representation.
- "Vague": Capturing the ambiguity introduced in the visual depiction.

Minivague is my word for a subclass of abstraction. It is the intentional act of visually representing an object with a conscious decision to keep it minimal yet recognizable, introducing a layer of ambiguity to the scene. This approach ensures that at least the “bare minimum” is achieved in whatever one is Minivaguing, making it function effectively within a scene."

**Rule:** Minivague and paint go hand in hand; however, one cannot Minivague first. One cannot simply do something with the action of Minivague and call it that; especially if they did not know how to do it in the first place. One must know how to paint and want to learn how to paint without minivaguing, in order for an action to be the conscious decision of minivague.

Appropriately understood, Minivague does not tear down the grandiosity of abstraction or art from any period. Minivague is a skill of reduction of work. There is no need to paint over it if it works. For example, in *Joseph’s Bloody Coat Brought to Jacob*, 1630 by Diego Velazquez Fig. 2, the legs and feet of the standing figures: when his leg is in shadow, that is just the underpainting. This carries onto the darker figures as well. Another example is *George Moore in the Artist’s Garden*, 1879 by Edouard Manet Fig. 3: the hands are a couple of quick suggestive strokes. Manet had the skill and knowledge to paint hands in detail; it is evident from his other works, even those done around the same time and scale.
Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4. *A22 Memory*, 4.33 x 6.2 Inches, Oil, Carpet, and Thread on Canvas, 2023
In some sense, Minivague is slightly “queer”, especially compared to Queerforming in terms of altering and emphasizing\(^2\). These two terms are two different processes. Fig. 4 is a memory painting\(^3\) of a moment in 2022. It uses both processes to give authenticity to the energy of the memory, while the room (the background) is more detailed than the bed and the figures. Highlighting that it is a memory of physicality in a physical space, with a field mouse on the floor. The walls and the room are energy, the highlight of the reversal of clarity between the background and foreground is flipped from a traditional photographic sense. Every time someone remembers a memory, they are remembering the memory of the memory. It is a leaking of memory and the spread of energy, even when they try to confine it. Even if the memory is new, like using something to get the form—then walking away to paint it.

The Queer, The Needle, and The Sewing Machine

Queerform/ing:

I. What is Queerform/ing?

Queerform/ing as a concept and a process is ambiguity and the queerness—ambiguity in sexualization, intimacy, and cravings/desires of the flesh; used with sexual tension and situations—shaped by a deliberate process of balance with explicit expression. While subverting traditional norms and stereotypes with queerness.

To Queerform in art, at least one of the following is necessary:

1. To distance oneself from stereotypical Gay Art with its unrealistic expectations, riddled with stereotypes, connotations, and sometimes excessive vulgar nature; to push work to the queer side of the queer side of the Gay/Queer Art spectrum. Queer Art can still display a sexual situation by not exaggerating sexualization to the extent that it becomes unrealistic to achieve.

2. The process of altering/emphasizing references used to make it more romantic, lighter, whimsical, softer, and tender than the figure/s and the situations actually are. The previously mentioned things vary. Style tenderness and softness.

3. “Filtering” taking and appropriating stereotypes into something new and Queer. Emphasizing what one sees or wants to be seen.

4. Avoid entirely fetishizing queer identities or alternatively, subvert traditional fetishization to foster a new queer culture.

5. Aspire to cultivate a culture that embraces an evolving spectrum of body diversity and resists predefined standards of desirability. Foster a dynamic understanding of masculinity that celebrates fluid and diverse gender expressions.

Queerform/ing exists throughout my artistic practice—it came about as a way to describe aspects of my practice in one word. It has since grown more structured with “guidelines”. This does not

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\(^2\) See “I. What is Queerform/ing?”

\(^3\) See “Painting Memories”
mean it only exists in the confines of my artistic practice. For example. It describes and is in line with artists like Salman Toor, Oscar yi Hou, Justin Yoon, Leon Scott-Engel, Doron Langberg, Robert Martin, Jacob Todd Broussard, Anthony Cudahy, Ken Gun Min, Christopher Nâjera Estrada, Li Wang (b. 1995, Beijing, China), and José Leonilson (b. 1957 - d. 1993 Brazil).

II. How and Why I Queerform:

Everything in the list is important to Queerform itself. In my work, I do not want my figures to be hypersexualized—similar in the way that the figures of Salman Toor, if his figures read as sexy he has done them wrong. He states, “We need to have a new culture, not one with these very specific molds of what kinds of bodies are most desirable. It’s interesting to try to push against that. For that reason, I like to go into kind of clownish, grotesque attributes in my painting, which are a way to say fuck you to sexiness—” 4. The Pink Boys can be sexy, sexual, intimate beings; it is just not to hypersexualize them like stereotypical Gay Art. There should be a realness that can be achieved. Life is not all sexual, intimate, celebrated, humor, trauma, and /or happy—it is all mixed together—always changing/switching like the zig-zag thread stitch of life and relationship. I aim to highlight the window-cropped view of moments through the Pink Boys with Queerforming. I want the Pink Boys to be sexual beings, not sexual objects with no being and/or agency. The work of José Leonilson serves as a poignant reference point, “where he created conceptual artworks focused on expressions of love and grief, viewed specifically through a queer lens” 5. His approach to portraying intimate, deeply personal experiences within the queer community offers valuable insights into the complexities of love, loss, and identity, enriching the narrative framework within which my work, ‘Queerforming,’ resides.

When it comes to the visibility and representation of Queers and Males, there is a dichotomy of what people think is “right” for people to be, the hidden and forgotten history, and what is true. Oscar yi Hou states, “I think visibility and representation has always been a kind of complex issue for me. I think on the one hand visibility can be a trap. … When visibility and representation is seen as an end in itself, they often doesn’t really accomplish much. … When visibility and representation need to be instrumentalized in the sense that they should be a means to an end rather than an end in itself. … How we make visible people, how we represent ourselves or other people is very important and the way we do it. I think we should always try to maintain a kind of cutting edge to visibility and representation, not to just be content with just, you know, making something visible, thinking, okay, it’s there. … There needs to be a kind of like, well, what else? Like, what is that doing? We have to be sure to—the representation that we make, we have to make sure aren’t being instrumentalized for other people’s ends. … If you want to be political about representation we have to make sure that we are the ones deciding

what’s political about it, and we are the ones deciding how to mobilize each representation”6. It is our job to combat and maintain proper visibility and representation in a world in flux with itself.

III. Queer Art:

In this thesis, Queer is employed not just as an umbrella term encompassing various non-normative sexual and gender identities, but more profoundly as a dynamic concept that seeks to evade and subvert definitive categorization. It advocates for fluidity over fixed identities, permitting expressions and existences that defy the restrictive shackles of traditional expectations. Into a world in which things can be and express themselves. In the Queer Homoerotic World, ‘queer’ embodies the deviation from and disruption of normative sexual and gender roles, highlighting a spectrum where identities and relationships are not fixed but are continually evolving. This concept of queerness actively opposes static or orthodox categorizations and embraces a more fluid, inclusive understanding of identity, which is reflected in both the content and the form of artistic expressions.

Outside of the world into the world we live in, the word Queer is used as an umbrella term in lieu of saying gay or LGBT. Queer is evading categories and gay is a category. Queer is evading being a category defined by other ideas and expectations. In Adam Eli’s The New Queer Conscience, he states,

“What does queer mean? I am gay because I primarily experience same-sex attraction, and, by my own definition, that also makes me queer. Many people have their own definition of what queer means, and one is no more valid than with another, but here is mine:

Queer: different, or other

If there are three blue chairs and one pink chair the pink chair is queer. Queerness only exists in opposition to what’s perceived as “normal”. When it comes to gender and sexuality, our societies. If you deviate from any part of that norm, welcome and pull up a seat. In my book, you are queer!”7

The definition of Queer varies from person to person. Due to the nature and usage of the term queer—Queer Art is not linear.

For a work to be Queer, it has to be in some way abating one or more connotations or stereotypes of what is being depicted, while being non-binary, going against the “traditional normal.” In terms of figures, Queer Art makes them “realistic,” not an unachievable thing in the real world, like the depictions of men in the work of Tom of Finland. Not hypersexualized, the sexualization and/or fetishization is not highly overt. Furthermore, it incorporates and plays with ambiguity. Queer art often seeks to challenge and subvert traditional notions of gender and sexuality, and may explore themes like gender fluidity, nonconformity, and intersectionality.

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Evolution, Discovery, & Exploration:

I. The Pink Boys (Figures):

The Pink Boys were born out of falling in love with the reaction and intrigue caused by the introduction of my first pink figure, Pink Man with Green Eyes in early 2019. A reaction due to a male figure being pink and the more extreme minivague of the body yet a detailed hand. It was an unfathomable combination to some.

As mentioned earlier, Pink Boys originally were strictly pink male figures, the conformity put upon them has been freed. This opening of the Pink Boy from just pink further challenges and expands the conversation around what it means to be male, queer, intimate, or simply human in contemporary society. The Pink Boy is a conduit to discuss sexuality, homosocial interaction, demisexuality, and intimacy. They are a way for me to explore homosocial and physical intimacy—while exploring sexuality as a Demisexual, within the Queer Homoerotic World they exist in. Through their forms and the stories they carry, the Pink Boys serve as dynamic vessels; they embody and convey the layered experiences and emotions of the queer community, their vivid depictions sparking dialogues and reflections on the nuances of queer intimacy.

The overlooked Queer intimate conceptual artworks of Brazilian artist José Leonilson 1957 - 1993 resonate profoundly, particularly his nuanced expressions of love and grief through a queer lens. Leonilson's work, characterized by its intimate portrayal of queer experiences and

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the complexities of living with HIV, offers a poignant context for understanding the layers of intimacy in my own art, prompting a deeper examination of the 'hidden' meanings and emotional resonances that lie beneath the surface.  

Their role as vessels is not limited to holding physical space in art but extends to encompassing and expressing the complexities of emotional and social interactions within the queer spectrum. As vessels, the Pink Boys transcend their individual stories to represent broader themes of queer identity, resistance, and acceptance, making them central figures in the ongoing dialogue about queer experiences in art.

![Pink Boys](image)

**Fig. 6. Leonilson. *Ninguém (Nobody)*, 1992, thread on embroidered cotton pillowcase, cotton fabric, pillow, 9 1/4 × 18 1/8 × 2".**

**II. Sexuality, Homosocial Relations, Masculinity, & Intimacy:**

Like identity, they are not monolithic nor static—but are composed of varied hues and shades, each representing different facets of a person's being and experience. They are diverse and multifaceted as the colors—pink, blue, orange, green, and purple—exist in one's body. These colors can serve as metaphors and states for the layers of identity beneath one's external appearance, hinting at a depth of human emotion and experience that is universal, yet often unacknowledged in mainstream discussions of masculinity, intimacy, and homosocial. Within the context of homosocial interactions, the *Pink Boys* embody the nuanced relationships that exist between males in non-romantic, romantic, sexual, and non-sexual settings. Just like them, the

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depiction is meant to free from conformity. To be oneself and not follow societal exceptions and stereotypes. Presenting masculinity and homosocial as a spectrum that embraces vulnerability, tenderness, and intimacy. It opens up a dialogue on the fluidity and diversity of male identity.

In exploring homosocial and intimacy themes, the Pink Boys series delves into the relationships between men, presenting a canvas where sexual undertones do not overshadow emotional intimacy. These figures, depicted in various scenarios, highlight the richness of male camaraderie, challenging societal norms that often stigmatize close male bonds as inherently sexual oremasculating.

III. Demisexuality in Relation to Self:

The aspect of demisexuality further deepens the exploration of self, particularly in how it intersects with themes of intimacy, sexuality, and personal identity. Demisexuality, in its basic form, involves experiencing sexual attraction only after forming a strong emotional connection. It is not always the case, and every Demisexual is different. This nuanced understanding of sexuality underscores the importance of emotional bonds and challenges the hypersexualized representations often prevalent in gay art and media.

Through demisexuality, I explore the complexity of male relationships. Challenging stereotypes and highlighting the richness of connections that exist beyond the romantic-sexual dichotomy, demisexuality reveals a more profound, shared understanding of what it means to be intimately connected to oneself and others.

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Fig. 7. Boner, 5.31 x 8 Inches, Oil and Thread on Canvas, 2023

Fig. 8. Side Detail of Boner, 5.31 x 8 Inches, Oil and Thread on Canvas, 2023
Fig. 9. *Morning Leisure*, 15.35 x 19.48 Inches, Oil, Pins, and Thread on Canvas, 2023
IV. Surfaces as Vessels:

The Ravioli (bag-type surface) naming them Ravioli is kind of like the eggplant emoji a petname for something sexual—there is also a word play between that and areola. The Ravioli was created by Queerform/ing and the desire to expand beyond the “rectangle” to a queer surface. Not having the energy happening on the “pictorial plane” fixed to it, but to have it radiate out. In Fig. 9, what is happening to the bed is spreading out onto the excess/surplus, and the bed sheet mass is being carried out. Queer surfaces are a conversation of conformity and acceptance within the art world, Queer world, masculinity, and intimacy. Queer Surfaces are the surface that my queer self has manipulated in some form. When I say conformity, I mean moving on from a conformity of self and past rules I put upon my work. In doing so allowing for exploration of surfaces, paint, figures/environments/vessels/worlds, and self on a deeper level. It is conformity to queer surfaces and conformity of self and intimacy liberation. Fig. 13 is a queer surface; the paper is not constrained or controlled it is organic. Going down, the wood is tight and rigid, into a phallic presentation with energy getting tight and hard below.

These surfaces are vessels serving not merely as containers or subjects but as embodiments of queerness, ambiguity, and the transformative potential of failure. Drawing from Judith Halberstam's The Queer Art of Failure, Low Theory becomes a crucial lens through which
we can understand these vessels not as fixed entities but as fluid, ever-changing embodiments of queer potentiality that challenge conventional understandings of success, visibility, and normativity. Low Theory is a concept adapted from Stuart Hall’s work involving the utilization of popular knowledge and accessible theory to examine alternatives and seek a way out of conventional binary formulations. It is a model of thinking that Halberstam extracted from, “Hall’s famous notion that theory is not an end unto itself but “a detour en route to something else”10. Low theory is interested in the spaces in between, those that evade being captured by the norms of hegemony or the allure of mainstream success. It challenges the divisions between high and low culture, theory and popular understanding, in order to explore more creative, cooperative, and unexpected ways of being in the world.11

Subverting Norms through Queer Vessels

Halberstam's low theory invites us to embrace failure, the non-normative, and the overlooked as sites of creative and transformative potential. The vessels within the Queer Homoerotic World—ranging from the Pink Boys to the playful and subversive balloons—embody this ethos, acting as queer forms that defy easy categorization and resist the commodification and standardization that often accompany visibility and recognition. In aligning with low theory, these vessels do not seek legibility within the conventional frameworks of art and queerness but rather celebrate the power of ambiguity and the unclassifiable.

The Pink Boys: A Case Study in Low Theory

The evolution of the Pink Boys from strictly pink male figures to representations that transcend color boundaries exemplifies the application of low theory to my artistic process. This transition marks a deliberate departure from the expectation of uniformity, embracing instead the unpredictable and the marginal. By allowing these figures to exist beyond the confines of their initial pink hue, I engage with Halberstam's notion that failure—or in this case, the refusal to adhere to a predetermined aesthetic criterion—can open up new spaces for expression and understanding within queer art.

Low Theory as a Method of Queer Unbecoming

Low theory, as applied to the artistic processes of Minivague and Queerform/ing, acts as a method of queer unbecoming. It challenges the drive towards clear, recognizable forms and instead valorizes the process of abstraction and the refusal to be pinned down. In Minivague, the act of reducing to the bare minimum is a form of resistance to the hegemony of detail and precision, reflecting a low theoretical embrace of the power of not fully knowing or revealing. This technique underscores the queer potential of failing to conform to normative artistic standards, thereby queering the very act of artistic creation itself.

Towards a Queer Futurity of Vessels

The vessels of the Queer Homoerotic World, examined through the lens of low theory, represent more than just thematic elements within my thesis. They are manifestations of a queer futurity that values the unpredictable, the non-normative, and the failures that defy conventional success. These vessels, in their refusal to be easily categorized or commodified, exemplify a form of queer resistance that is crucial for imagining new possibilities within both art and queerness. Thus, by integrating low theory into the understanding of these vessels, we open up a space for a more nuanced and expansive exploration of queerness, one that celebrates the transformative potential of failure and the uncharted territories it may lead us to.

V. Sewing and Thread Relationship:

The creation of the Ravioli led to learning and discovering sewing. The use of what others would deem wrong or broken due to the sewing machine not being exact—is something that is right. It is inconsistent in its action as a machine; it breathes in deep changing analogue. It shows intimacy, relationship, and changing “roles” and in general throughout life (Fig. 10 & 11). The Zig-Zag function, what others deem undesired and wrong—is a desire and proof of a real living thing. It is not one of pure machine accuracy, conforming to others and society. One that embraces moving beyond conformity.

Tension and the transfer of energy are possible Fig. 12 is an example of this. The two paintings on paper interact and change each other over time due to the band connecting them varying in tension as time goes on—flexing the paper and creating movement in and outside of the pictorial plane. Thread and birdnesting on the band are like hair and/or nerves further connecting.

Fig. 11. Detail of Pink Boys at Sundown, 11.02 x 8.66 Inches, Oil and Thread on Canvas, 2023
Fig. 12. *Nipple Play*, 18.7 x 5.51 Inches, Oil and Thread on Paper and Canvas, 2024

Fig. 13. *Whims of Wood*, 5.70 x 12.48 x 3 Inches, Oil and Paper on Wood, 2024
VI. Painting Memories: (Includes Poetry of Memories)

Painting Memories particularly through pieces like 'D23 Memory', intertwines visual art with poetry to profound effect. The artwork and accompanying poems such as '23D: Hands are Used' are not mere complements but are deeply interwoven, each enhancing the other's narrative and emotional resonance. The use of ravioli-shaped cushions as vessels in these paintings not only captures intimate moments but also serves as a metaphor for the preservation and evolution of memories. These memories, symbolized through both the physical filling of polyfill and the emotional layering of poetic text, invite the viewer to experience the fluidity and permanence of the emotions they evoke.

The physical act of filling vessels represents not just the retention of memories but also their transformation over time—akin to memories themselves, which can be preserved yet altered with new experiences and insights. The emotional resonance of this process is further unpacked through the poetry paired with each painting, which uses delicate wordplay to explore and emphasize themes of connection, touch, and the cyclical nature of emotional intimacy. Together, the visual and textual elements of these artworks create a complex tapestry of memory and identity that is both a personal reflection and a universal exploration.

The memory of the moment and the fixation of the moment—including everything surrounding it, comprise the moment itself. It is about discerning when and what to fixate on, so the memory transcends mere recollection into a memory not confined to one's time when alive. Like an analogue machine, our weave/thread relationship and perspective changes throughout life, influenced by shifting needs and roles. As mentioned earlier, every time someone remembers a memory, they are remembering the memory of the memory. In Ravioli form, one can manipulate the "leak" Fig. 15. (painting and the room explained on Pg. 6 paragraph 1), allowing for the highlighting of memory in a way further accentuating it. The excess and surplus of the Ravioli beyond the "pictorial plane" are a means to this. The poetry on page 21 is associated with Fig. 15-16 and Fig. 17-19. 

Fig. 14: Hair on My Pillow, 2.75 x 3.34 Inches, Hair and Thread on Canvas, 2024
Fig. 15: Identical to Fig. 4. *A22 Memory*, 4.33 x 6.2 Inches, Oil, Carpet, and Thread on Canvas, 2023

Fig. 16: Side View of *A22 Memory*, 4.33 x 6.2 Inches, Oil, Carpet, and Thread on Canvas, 2023
Fig. 17. *D23 Memory*, 12.36 x 15.94
Inches, Oil, Thread, and Pins on Canvas, 2024
Fig. 18. Side View of *D23 Memory*, 12.36 x 15.94 Inches, Oil, Thread, and Pins on Canvas, 2024

Fig. 19. Detail of *D23 Memory*, 12.36 x 15.94 Inches, Oil, Thread, and Pins on Canvas, 2024
Poetry of Memories (in order Fig. 15-16 and Fig. 17-19):

**22A:** April 2022 in an 1880s attic converted into an apartment. Tis is 4:00pm.
Linguistics are fun in their mouthy ways—going back and forth in discourse.
Images taken before the sun wades too far into the horizon. Tis is 5:20pm.
On a Bed; thinking to self, “Is that a field mouse in front of the fridge? Or
have I been drugged?” Tis was a real field mouse. Soft and rough inside
the room and out in the field. Touch.
The Exorcist encourages and critiques from the background to the
front, like a pump-up man. Fit of laughter.
Tis is 10:45pm, surprised by said amount and energy taken
place. One does forget to eat food.
Tis is 11:20pm; dramatically and whimsical—I
descend the grand staircase four floors. Careful not
to wake the Reagen-obsessed owner.In order to
catch my mode of transport— which is a Cab.
Cab of cry in which I know why.
Leaving realizing there were no regrets and happy with thine self. Balloon
of intellect rises to the discovery and play, being a new
Sapiosexual with the Demisexual.

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**23D:** Hands are used
In many ways, can and will they be used.
Holding hand—while one is about to go.
Looking at you still holding hands—while you are about to go.
I may not know you— while you are about to go.
I know the moment is cute and wholesome in its way.
Still holding hands after you go.
Afterword: Queer Futurity and the Continuous Weave

This paper is like the sewing machine's Zig-Zag thread relationship, and those threads are still being stitched, explored, and experienced. Like that—myself, Pink Boys, and Queerform/ing at the heart of my work are still growing. As this thesis weaves its narrative through the Queer Homoerotic World, the vessels within—crafted through processes like Queerform/ing and explored within the framework of Low Theory—highlight a continuous dialogue on the queer potentialities of artistic expression.

In the Queer Homoerotic World, vessels from the Pink Boys to the playful balloons, are not just static elements confined to the text but are embodiments of a queer futurity that values unpredictability and the non-normative. They challenge, subvert, and reimagine the parameters of normativity, illustrating the transformative potential that defies conventional artistic success.

In this instance, I am the thread—I am the Queer sewing machine of intimacy, continuously interlacing themes of queerness, intimacy, and visibility. Just as the Pink Boys evolve beyond their initial pinkness to explore and express deeper nuances of identity and intimacy, so too does this thesis propose a future where these concepts can be further expanded.

I will continue to work with and explore homosocial and physical intimacy through Queerform/ing and the Pink Boys. They are not just subjects but active participants in a larger discourse—ways for me to celebrate, explore, discover, and push the boundaries of intimacy while navigating my sexuality as a Demisexual. The narrative constructed herein is just the beginning. It is not merely a reflection of past insights but a call to action, to continue the delicate task of Queerform/ing as we navigate the intricate dance of visibility, representation, and the politics of queer aesthetics.

The dialogue on queer futurity, vessels, and the intersections of art and identity is far from complete—it is an open-ended invitation to continue pushing the boundaries of understanding, representation, and aesthetic expression in queer art.
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www.youtube.com, February 6, 2023.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clTG2H5f5lQ&ab_channel=BrooklynMuseum.


Appendix

Matthew Weimer
“to Feel, to Mend, to Be” Brochure
Written by John Brooks b.1978: Written by John Brooks, b. 1978:
Visual artist and poet known for exploring themes of queer
identity, memory, death, and place. His work delves into
contemplation and the expression of emotion, focusing on the
transformative power and emotional resonance of specific
experiences, aligning with what Max Beckmann termed "the
deepest feeling about the mystery of being."

Despite our best efforts, existence can grind us down. To paraphrase Henri
Matisse, we give ourselves over to too little joy. After surviving in the shadows
for millennia, Queer joy is now—thanks to to the courageous and relentless
endeavors of activists, artists, and everyday people—more vigorous and visible
than ever before. Matthew Weimer explores and celebrates this new reality in
paintings centered around intimacy, connection, and pleasure. The artist’s
self-styled “pink boys” possess a playful confidence that assures us that they have
no difficulty accessing their shared joy. The world will stand in the way of neither
their fun nor their sensual adventures.

Slightly abstracted in a process he calls a “minivague,” Weimer’s
compositions are recognizably figurative but not traditionally representational.
Employing another term of his invention, he “queerforms” his subjects so that
they are not idealized in the stereotypical manner of mainstream “gay art.” These
are not Tom of Finland boys. Weimer’s subjects are characterized by an obvious
level of comfort with themselves and each other, and an easy, fluid, tenderness.
The artist holds up this softness as one of the qualities that makes his work
distinctly Queer instead of gay. This may seem like simply a difference in
semantics, but definitions are constantly evolving, and it is now generally
understood that the Queer umbrella encompasses and allows for more variations
than its gay counterpart. Interestingly, Weimer has color vision deficiency,
meaning that he has difficulty distinguishing certain shades of color, particularly
in reds and pinks, which are the two foundational hues of his signature color
palette. It is, therefore, not only Weimer’s palette that is Queer, but his very vision
itself. Far from being accidental, this kinship reveals an inextricable link between
the artist’s human experience and the work he makes. The Queerness of Weimer’s
color palette may be consciously conceptual in origin, but it is also a result of the

12 “Ever since there have been men, man has given himself over to too little joy. That alone, my
brothers, is our original sin. I should believe only in a God who understood how to dance.” -
Henri Matisse
way he literally sees and senses the world. This fact emphasizes the paradoxical dichotomy of Queerness—although it is heterodox to the dominant culture, otherness is an essential way of being to those for whom it is natural. Thusly, Queerness should never have to justify itself, be it either in art or in daily life.

Influences from artists as disparate as Salman Toor, David Bates, Susan Rothenberg, Alice Neel, and Oscar Yi Hou are apparent, though Weimer’s aesthetic is highly individual. His figures’ body hair brings to mind Pavel Tchelitchew’s “The Lion Boy,” (1936-1937), a seminal work in the canon of Queer painting. But where Tchelitchew’s subject is wistful, Weimer’s subjects are jubilant. His formal and conceptual playfulness and originality are evident in his wall-mounted and self-standing “raviolis,” which boldly challenge ideas of what constitutes a painting. Weimer’s process begins with the construction of a sort of bag, fashioned out of canvas, inside of which is inserted a piece of plywood. After using tacks to secure the substrate, Weimer closes the bag—crimping the edges of the ravioli, so to speak—using a sewing machine that doesn’t do zigzags correctly. The ups and downs of the irregular stitches personify Queerness while also representing the peaks and valleys of a relationship. Pointedly ensuring that his hand is present and intelligible in his work, Weimer reminds us that living and loving and being is messy, rigorous stuff. All the more reason to seek and celebrate pleasure when and where we can.

— John Brooks