Un Archivo Inexistente

The Inexistent Archive

Felipe Rivas San Martín

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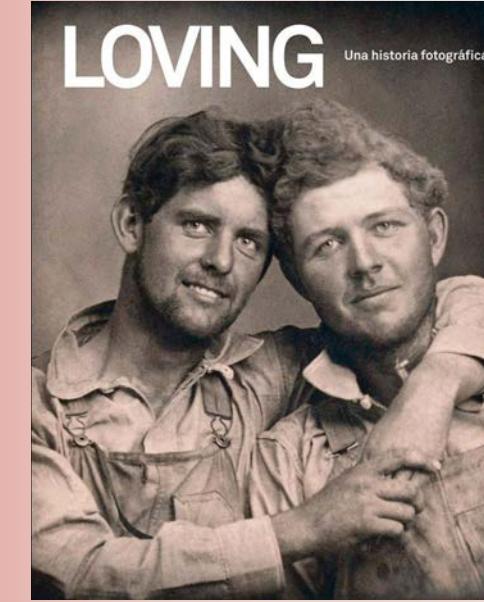
fig. 1. Portada de *Loving. Una historia fotográfica* (2020), Duomo, edición española.

"(…) con quién empatiza el historiador historicista. La respuesta resulta inevitable: con el vencedor. Y quienes dominan en cada caso son los herederos de todos aquellos que vencieron alguna vez. Por consiguiente, la empatía con el vencedor resulta en cada caso favorable para el dominador del momento".

Walter Benjamin, *Tesis sobre la historia*

Gran parte de los homosexuales o *queer* que nacimos durante el siglo XX alrededor del mundo carecimos de un imaginario sexoafectivo propio a lo largo de nuestras infancias y adolescencias. Un imaginario que nos resonara profundamente o que reflejara nuestras orientaciones y deseos. Las narrativas dominantes a nivel global promovían y reforzaban la heteronormatividad, estableciendo una condición de normalidad exclusiva para las experiencias y relaciones heterosexuales, mientras que se relegaba al ámbito de lo anormal a cualquier disidencia. En este contexto, nuestras formas de amar y desear fueron silenciadas, estigmatizadas y, en gran medida, negadas, dificultando la construcción de un sentido de pertenencia genuino y de un repertorio cultural propio. Durante las primeras décadas del siglo XX, la homosexualidad transitó por los corredores de la

Counternarratives, fictions and possible worlds

> "(...) with whom the adherents of historicism actually empathize. The answer is inevitable: with the victor. And all rulers are the heirs of those who conquered before them. Hence, empathy with the victor invariably benefits the rulers."
> Walter Benjamin, *Theses on the Philosophy of History*

A large part of homosexuals or queers who were born around the world during the 20th century lacked a sexual-affective imaginary of our own throughout our childhoods and teenage years. A deeply resonating imaginary that reflected our orientations and desires. At a global level, the dominant narratives promoted and reinforced heteronormativity, establishing a condition of normality exclusive to heterosexual experiences and relationships, while relegating any dissidence to the realm of the abnormal. In this context, our ways of loving and desiring were silenced, stigmatized and, to a large extent, denied, hindering our possibility of creating an authentic sense of belonging and a cultural repertoire of our own. During the first decades of the 20th century, homosexuality went through the corridors of psychiatry labeled as an illness, later, with the HIV crisis, our already limited representation was marked by stigma and suspicion.

However, despite these difficulties, homosexual, queer and gender-dissident people and communities found ways to resist, to express themselves, to create themselves against the current. These communities slowly developed alternative proposals that were consolidated in their own imaginary; in a symbolic space where forbidden and censored traits found a place, even if marginal. Today, many of these ways of inhabiting the world, which were recorded, are viewed with a temporal distance that detaches these gestures from their original context. This imaginary, which was born as resistance, can now spread in the present, becoming a legacy, a repertoire that bears witness to the past, for those of us who live this "present."

A clear example of this phenomenon is the photographic collection by Hugh Nini and Neal Treadwell, recently published in the book *Loving. A Photographic History of Men in Love, 1850s-1950s*.[1] This collection shows a diverse set of images of homosexual men who,

between 1850 and 1960, posed openly in front of the camera, revealing their love and their identity without subterfuge. These captured scenes, full of everyday life and affection, show queer subjects in different contexts. Through these images, we not only observe a fully lived homosexuality, but also a marked hyper-westernized character of their identities: men in suits, on their cars or yachts, in landscapes of leisure and recreation such as meadows, beaches, forests, swimming pools or photography studios. These scenes speak to us not only of a homosexual identity, but also of technical, social and economic privileges (an expression of those who had access to cameras): in short, of class privileges.

This class condition is expressed in the photographic archives of the Nini and Treadwell Collection, and also in other documentary traces or research in which similar conditions can be observed.[2] That is to say, there is in them a clear distance from the heteronormative imaginary, but at the same time also a dislocation with diverse territorial and cultural realities. For example, when positioning ourselves from the Global South, those imaginaries, even if they are inclusive from a gender perspective, seem distant and alien, further deepening the feeling of loss and lack of belonging.

In this context, marked by the absence of our own imaginaries, *The Inexistent Archive* project by the Chilean artist Felipe Rivas San Martín is born. With digital tools based on artificial intelligence, Rivas San Martín creates an archive of queer affections, which imagines possible futures, compensating the historical absence of certain figures and experiences in the visual record. This archive explores, through various prompts, those absences that the artist observes in current archive images, expanding their possibilities and redefining the past. In this case, the incorporation

of women, traditionally excluded from both technical histories —such as photography— and from stories about affections and homosexualities. For example, this imaginative gesture vindicates the figure of the lesbian woman within the local context, not merely by allowing her existence to be recorded, but by giving an account of her otherness and her right to inhabit the archive.

In addition to expressing affections through these images, Rivas San Martín's archive extends to other representations of everyday life, including records of workers, farmers, railway workers, seamstresses and workers in other trades, figures that rarely have a central place in the visual imaginaries of diversity. Through these interventions, *The Inexistent Archive* challenges inherited absences and builds a queer and community narrative, drawing attention to a repertoire of dissident existences that, finally, find their place in this fiction.

On the Layout

> "Feeling means being involved in something"
> Agnes Heller, *A Theory of Feelings*

Designing and laying out this book involved a deep connection with every generated image. The fact of being homosexual and working with an imaginary that resonates with me has enabled me to perceive the connections and affections between those men and women with a certain degree of nostalgia. Nostalgia not only for seeing myself reflected in them, but also for evoking thousands of friends, colleagues, boyfriends and lovers.

For several weeks, Felipe and I have met constantly to discuss the layout of his images. We have explored various ideas for organizing the set: by production date, by formal characteristics such as orientation (vertical or horizontal), types of shots or framing; we even considered grouping them based on elements in the scene or representative characters. However, when analyzing these proposals and carefully observing the photographs, we couldn't ignore the emotional, symbolic and affective content between these subjects, bodies, gestures and temporalities. Although the characters created by Felipe through artificial intelligence tools are intrinsically fictitious, they manage to promote and incite emotion and complicity.

Roland Barthes would call this quality the *punctum* in photography, referring to the potential in the image of triggering an emotional reaction in the viewer. I have always considered that technologies, digital or virtual, create a distance with what is "real" in that which is represented. However, this *Inexistent Archive* has given life to those who have been absent. This simple gesture, but full of poetic power, strengthens the complicity with these images.

For this reason, the layout of *The Inexistent Archive* is nourished by the emotional conditions inherent to its photographs, which in turn invite us to let this quality define the "algorithm"[3] used to articulate the narrative and the visual story of the images that we will see in this publication.

1. Hugh Nini y Neal Treadwell, *Loving. Una historia fotográfica* (Barcelona: Duomo Ediciones, 2020).

2. For example, in the images of the American photographer George Platt Lynes or in the publication *Homoaffectionalism: Male Bonding from Gilgamesh to the Present* by the activist Paul D. Hardman (1923-).

3. Here the algorithm is understood as the set of defined and ordered instructions to solve a problem or carry out a task.

Estilo y error: retratos queer y tecnologías raras

Eduardo Carrera Rivadeneira
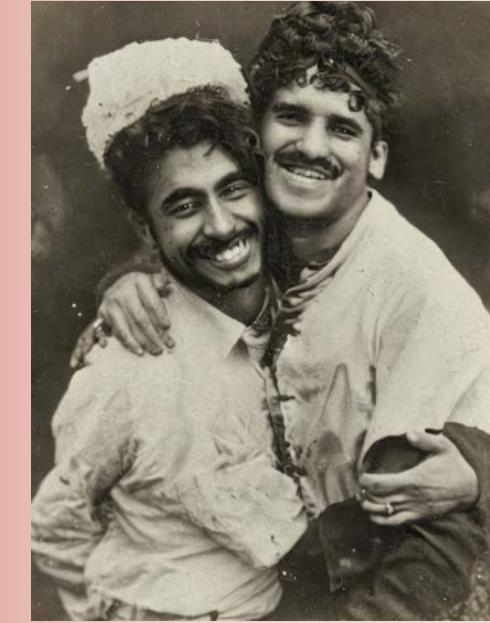
fig. 1. *Un archivo inexistente II* (2022). Felipe Rivas San Martín. Fotografía generada con Inteligencia Artificial, impresión sobre papel, 40 x 30 cm.

En una fotografía en blanco y negro con tonos discretamente sepia, aparecen dos hombres que miran a la cámara y sonríen. Sus rostros se apoyan el uno en el otro en un gesto de afecto, y posan abrazados como si fuesen una pareja. La fotografía presenta una estética de finales del siglo XIX o inicios del siglo XX. A diferencia de los retratos típicos de esa época, que generalmente capturaban a sujetos de la clase alta o intelectuales, esta imagen presenta a dos hombres que, por sus atuendos, pertenecen a la clase obrera. Su tez, posiblemente de un tono marrón, y su cabello oscuro y abundante sugieren que podrían ser hombres racializados. Sin embargo, al observar detenidamente, se nota algo extraño en sus manos, en la boca y en los pliegues de sus ropas. Se trata de una imagen producida a través de inteligencia artificial (IA) por el artista Felipe Rivas San Martín, como parte del proyecto artístico *Un archivo inexistente*.

Style And Error: *Queer* Portraits And Rare Technologies

In a black and white photograph with subtle sepia tones, two men are looking at the camera and smiling. Showing affection, their faces lean against each other while they pose embraced as if they were a couple. The photograph presents an aesthetic from the late 19th or early 20th century. Unlike typical portraits of that time, which generally captured upper-class or intellectual people, this image presents two men who, by their attire, belong to the working class. Their complexion, possibly of a brown tone, and their dark, abundant hair suggest that they could be racialized men. However, upon closer inspection, we can see something strange in their hands, mouths, and the folds of their garments. This is an image produced with artificial intelligence (AI) by the artist Felipe Rivas San Martín, as part of the artistic project *The Inexistent Archive*. In the artist's words:

> This proposal is a "retrofuturistic" exercise that uses computational algorithms —a technology that is usually immersed in future narratives— to reimagine our local queer past and reclaim an archive that practically could not exist. The result is a set of strangely moving and affective images, which provoke a kind of artificial nostalgia by revealing their nature as an impossible past, a denied memory and a clear algorithmically simulated presence. The images are credible at first glance, but upon closer inspection they reveal the deeply queer imperfections of a technology still in its process of development.[1]

In this series of images, Rivas San Martín represents queerness as homosexual subjects who have been rendered invisible throughout history. These photographs contain the essential elements of portraiture logic, which captures and represents aspects of identity such as personality, habits, dress style, sexual orientation and fashion trends. Although they seem to depict real subjects, these images present a paradox: these subjects did not exist in reality. Who do these images portray if the people in them are not

real? They are imaginary subjects that have taken shape and face through the production of AI-generated images. The AI models that Rivas San Martín uses are pre-trained. However, the artist collects specific visual data to further fine-tune and personalize this training. The selection process is meticulous, with images labeled based on precise characteristics that the model must learn to recognize and replicate. Through specific prompts, Rivas San Martín provides the AI with detailed information about the subjects, including aspects such as skin color, race, gender, clothing, and social class. In this way, the artist generates representations of subaltern subjects who have historically been marginalized from the official history of photography or who are difficult to locate in archives, providing them with a visual agency that is almost never granted to them.

One has to look closely at the AI-generated images in order to identify them as such. One way to recognize these images is to look out for faces and heads that have odd proportions or unusual asymmetries, or bodies that may display unnatural postures or shapes. Elements such as hands, eyes, or teeth are often flawed, appearing with extra or missing fingers, misaligned eyes, or unrealistic facial features. They may also have spots, lines, or blurry areas that lack coherence in the context of the image. Textures on skin, clothing, or backgrounds may appear strange, blurry, or unnaturally repetitive, evidencing the intervention of AI in their creation. A crucial aspect of this project is precisely the artist's decision not to retouch or correct the imperfections of the algorithm that would have allowed him to achieve total realism in the representation. On the contrary, he chooses to keep the errors and give them a critical sense, which the artist himself describes as a differential evidence between algorithmic images and old analogue photographs:

> The error is proof: the radical evidence that these images could not have been possible. While Roland Barthes describes photography as a material object whose power lies in being a trace of the past, an indicative testimony that "this has been", the quasi-photographs of

A Nonexistent Archive demonstrate its opposite condition: "this has not been".[2]

"Queer errors," according to Rivas San Martín, reveal not only the artificial production of images, but also the fundamental subversion of dominant historical narratives, challenging the conventional notion of what is and what is not.

The presence of errors in the image can represent a failure for conventional photographers, who value technical perfection and precision. American academic Jack Halberstam explores the concept of failure as a productive and subversive mode of resistance within queer culture. He argues that the dominant society's emphasis on success and productivity can be oppressive, and proposes that embracing the failure of queerness is a way of challenging norms, creating alternative possibilities, and imagining new futures[3]. Halberstam says, "Under certain circumstances, failing, losing, forgetting, undoing, becoming undone, not knowing, can actually offer more creative, more cooperative, more surprising ways of being and being in the world"[4]. In this context, errors in AI-generated portraits not only reveal their artificial nature, but also act as a manifestation of queer resistance, challenging traditional expectations of perfection and success.

In *Style: A Queer Cosmology*, Taylor Black suggests that a portrait possesses an unsettling quality, a peculiarity in expression that stands out in a striking way. This "peculiarity in expression" not only highlights the portrait's unique style, but also distinguishes it both from other paintings on the wall and the depicted subject itself, emphasizing that the "something strange" in the portrait's expression has a more powerful presence than the subject itself.[5] This ontological notion of style, as described by Black, can also be understood in virtual terms according to authors such as Charles Sanders Peirce, Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze, and Brian Massumi: an immaterial and ephemeral but equally real perception of life.[6] In the context of Rivas San Martín's images, the errors in his style not only reveal

his algorithmic condition, but also underscore the inherent existence of queer subjects, which challenges the conventions of heteronormative representation. When looking at the portraits in *The Inexistent Archive*, we are not seeing replicas or abstractions of queer lives, but queer lives intensified and turned into archives, memories, and histories. We are confronted with the mystery of queer lives, which is revealed in how these subjects transcend or escape their nonexistent frame of representation. Thus, once again, in Rivas San Martín's archive, queerness manifests itself as a series of portraits of subjects with something peculiar in their presence.

Style, as defined by Taylor, transcends mere personal preference or passing trends. Rather, it encapsulates an omnipresent and inexhaustible force that permeates all aspects of existence. It prefigures and defines a universe imbued with diversity and singularity. Unlike aesthetics, which focuses on superficial beauty, style involves a deeper exploration of expression, highlighting the qualities that distinguish one individual from another.[7] It requires keen observation and attentive listening to discern the nuances and characteristics that signal uniqueness and individuality. In this way, error and style not only become means of differentiation in Rivas San Martín's images, but also fundamental elements to understand and value the complexity of queer existences.

In Rivas San Martín's photographs, the style of the queer subjects reflects the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of the popular class of early 20th century Latin America. The men and women in the images wear practical and sturdy clothing, designed to withstand the demands of manual labor and adapted to the European fashion influences of the time. This includes white shirts and usually dark pants made of thick fabrics, suitable to face both work and changing weather conditions. The subjects portrayed wear few accessories; men wear simple hats such as berets or caps, while women opt for headscarves, aprons to protect their clothing, and work tools such as brooms. This attire also functions in the images of *The Inexistent Archive* as an expression of class identity and solidarity, signaling a belonging to the working-class community and subtle forms of cultural resistance in that historical context. The combination of these elements underscores how style, more than just a superficial aesthetic, emerges as a dynamic force that cuts across and defines both individual expression and broader social structures, revealing the complexity and depth of queer identity in different historical, economic, and cultural contexts.

1. Felipe Rivas San Martín, "Un archivo inexistente", in *Agenda Kuir 2024* (Barcelona: Trio Editorial, 2024), p. 161.

2. In Felipe Rivas San Martín's "Notes on The Inexistent Archive" in the present edition.

3. Jack Halberstam, *The queer art of failure* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 88 and 92.

4. Ibid.

5. Taylor Black, "Introduction: the elementals of style", in *Style: A Queer Cosmology* (New York: New York University, 2023), p. 25.

6. Ibid., p. 26.

7. Ibid., p. 4.

Archivos afectivos y archivos virtuales

Mariairis Flores Leiva
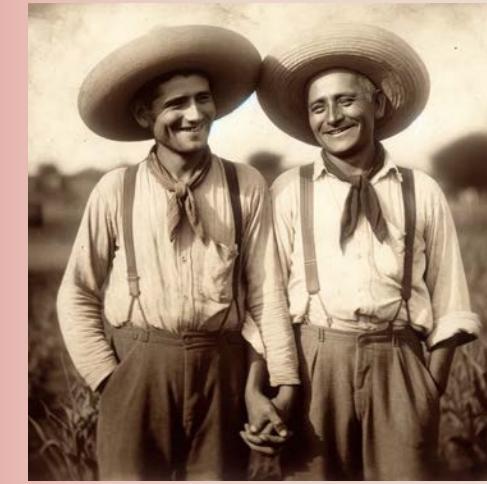
fig. 1. *Un archivo inexistente XCIII* (2022). Felipe Rivas San Martín. Fotografía generada con Inteligencia Artificial, impresión sobre papel, 40 x 40 cm.

La primera vez que vi algunas de las imágenes que componen *Un Archivo Inexistente* una sensación de ternura me sobrevino. Había en ellas algo absolutamente inédito, pero al mismo tiempo un imaginario reconocible alusivo a lo sentimental. Se trata de "remedos" de fotografías antiguas que muestran a parejas del mismo sexo y/o género en una actitud que denota complicidad, amor o deseo. Pensar en la posibilidad de que existiera ese tipo de registros me permitió ficcionar un pasado distinto. Quiero insistir en que esto que describo fue una primera impresión marcada por el entusiasmo. Como feminista creo firmemente en que la heterosexualidad es un régimen político, y como tal ha generado profundas mermas en cientos de vidas que han decidido disentir de su normatividad y, de un modo distinto, también en quienes han sido modelados por su carácter obligatorio. Debido a este posicionamiento político es que mi percepción de una propuesta como la de Rivas siempre será interesada y empática.

Quise distanciarme de mis propias impresiones para ampliar mi perspectiva, por ello decidí mostrarle

generada". Hacer de la IA el medio para imaginar un pasado impensable logra producir un imaginario crítico. *Un Archivo Inexistente* es, por una parte, la constatación de aquello que fue negado para quienes torcieron la heterosexualidad. Por otra, evoca un sentimiento complejo como es la anemoia, esa capacidad de sentir nostalgia por algo que no hemos experimentado. Sus imágenes nos permiten añorar un pasado distinto, desear aquello que no existió, puesto que anhelar tiempos pretéritos parece tener más sentido que ilusionarse con un futuro en tiempos de distopía.

Affective Archives And Virtual Archives

The first time I saw some of the images that make up *The Inexistent Archive*, a feeling of tenderness came over me. There was something absolutely unprecedented in them, but at the same time a recognizable imaginary alluding to sentimental aspects. They are "imitations" of old photographs that show same-sex and/or gender couples in an attitude of complicity, love or desire. Thinking on the possibility that such records could have existed enables me to fictionalize a different past. I want to insist that what I describe was a first impression marked by enthusiasm. As a feminist, I firmly believe that heterosexuality is a political regime, and as such it has generated profound losses in hundreds of lives that have decided to dissent from its normativity and, in a different way, also in those who have been shaped by its obligatory nature. Due to this political position, my perception of a proposal like Rivas's will always be interested and empathetic.

I wanted to distance myself from my own impressions in order to broaden my perspective, so I decided to show six images from the series to an 87-year-old person, in order to have this person's opinion and thereby identify another point of view. This person's first comment indicated that they were old photos, presenting a mother and her daughter, two characters that this person could not determine if they were men or women, and two effeminate friends. For me, the most interesting comment was: "Photo three [according to the order in which they had been presented] seems unthinkable to me, because they are peasants from 'years ago', it is unthinkable that they could have held hands at that time, it would have been a tremendous public scandal." Based on these words I thought that, instead of an inexistent archive, which points to the fact that we could not find anything similar, even if we looked for it, what we see is an inconceivable archive, an archive that is not real, but that could not even have existed as an idea or possibility in the era it recreates. This condition of non-viability

refers to the prohibition of living a dissident sexuality in past times like the ones represented, an issue that this series of images created by artificial intelligence (AI) challenges in a dislocated way, since from its present it questions what has already happened.

The feminist philosopher Ann Cvetkovich in her book *An Archive of Feelings* (2003) elaborates the concept of queer trauma to expose the psychological and physical pain associated with a non-heteronormative life. This is created by the different types of correctives and violence to which those who manifest a gender expression or a sexuality that is discordant with the norm are subjected. Elaborating experiences from the notion of trauma enables them to be validated in a dimension that is public and collective. To build her hypothesis, Cvetkovich articulates an "'archive of feelings', an exploration of cultural texts as repositories of feelings and emotions, which are encoded not only in the content of texts, but in the practices that surround their production and reception. The focus on trauma serves as an entry point into a vast archive of feelings, the many forms of love, rage, intimacy, grief, shame, among other things that are part of the vitality of queer cultures."[1] There is a base sadness in the construction of a memory or an archive of sexual dissidence, since, despite the discussion on love, the idea of shock is the one that predominates along with the idea of recognition. Although Cvetkovich's proposal is based on the reality of North America, when we look at local archives the situation is not too different and at the time that there begins to be a record that can be accessed, mainly through the press, what we find are news stories marked by violence, in which a derogatory tone is also used to refer to those who do not obey the sex-gender norm.

fig. 5. "El huaso y la lavandera" (2015), proyecto *Tag/Etiquetas*. Felipe Rivas San Martín.

1. Ann Cvetkovich, *Un archivo de sentimientos* (Barcelona: Ediciones Bellaterra, 2018), p.22.

fig. 1. *BBBQU IV"* (2022). Felipe Rivas San Martín. Dibujo en lápiz sobre papel a partir de boceto digital generado con Inteligencia Artificial, 21 x 14.8 cm.

1. Felipe Rivas San Martín, *Una genealogía queer de los algoritmos computacionales.* Tesis doctoral, Universitat Politècnica de València, 2022. https://riunet.upv.es/handle/10251/187463

2. Mi primera experiencia entre imágenes y algoritmos fue con la serie *El sueño neoliberal* (2015), realizada cuando la empresa Google hizo público el sistema Deep Dream, resultado de experimentos con sus algoritmos de interpretación de imagen. El ejercicio que realicé consistió en subir una fotografía icónica del golpe de Estado en Chile y someterla a sucesivas "interpretaciones" por el algoritmo, hasta volverla irreconocible.

Imaginación artificial

En 2022 se volvieron ampliamente accesibles los modelos generativos de imágenes a partir de texto, o que reinterpretaban las ya existentes. Ese *boom* de los sistemas generativos acaparó la atención mediática y reactivó viejas discusiones sobre la noción de autoría en relación con la imagen técnica o el estatus "artístico" de la misma. El éxtasis que producían estos sistemas se extendió *dentro*, pero especialmente *fuera* del campo artístico, estableciendo una curiosa resonancia con las utopías democratizadoras del arte, que parecen concretarse en un momento de aceleración tecnológica, de crisis humanista y de sustitución de las formas habituales del capital.

La aparición de esos sistemas de acceso abierto —y en algunos casos gratuito— me permitió desarrollar proyectos artísticos utilizando modelos algorítmicos computacionales, que habían sido mi objeto de investigación doctoral[1], pero que hasta ese momento no había expresado en obra, salvo algunos casos puntuales[2].

Mi respuesta a ese *boom* generativo, a la vez automática e intuitiva fue integrar modelos de inteligencia artificial en los procesos de elaboración de obras que terminarían siendo pinturas en óleo sobre tela o dibujos

Esta condición de desacoplamiento provoca, hasta cierto punto, un cuestionamiento a la política centrada en el problema de la privacidad de los datos, relevancia que se da en el marco de una matriz neoliberal que implica tanto la apropiación de los datos por parte de empresas, como la clausura epistemológica en la propiedad individual y su reclamo. Pero esa condición técnica (no son mis datos, sino nuestros) a la vez habilita una apertura hacia la comprensión colectiva o comunitaria de los datos, casi como un comunismo de datos —que sería otra forma de decir "justicia algorítmica"—. Lo anterior se asociaría a compartir y gestionar colectivamente los datos en beneficio de la sociedad en su conjunto, utilizar los datos de manera más equitativa, promover un acceso igualitario a los datos; establecer una transparencia en su recopilación y uso; definir una ética mínima en la inteligencia artificial; promover la educación y alfabetización en datos, en investigación pública y colaborativa. En resumen: desalambrar los datos.

Notes on The Inexistent Archive

Artificial Imagination

Text-to-image generative models, or those reinterpreting existing images, became widely accessible in 2022. This boom in generative systems captured media attention and resurfaced old debates on the notion of authorship in relation to the technical image or its "artistic" status. The ecstasy produced by these systems spread *inside*, but especially *outside* the artistic field, establishing a particular resonance with the democratising utopias of art, which seem to take shape in a moment of technological acceleration, humanist crisis and the replacement of the usual forms of capital.

The emergence of these open access systems —and in some cases free— enabled me to develop artistic projects using computational algorithmic models, which had been the subject of my doctoral research[1], but which until then I had not expressed in artworks, except for a few specific cases.[2]

My reaction to this generative boom, both automatic and intuitive, was to integrate artificial intelligence models into the processes of creating artworks that would end up as oil paintings on canvas or drawings on paper. I had previously performed this operation of confronting old and new media,[3] but in these cases they had a more abstract or *figural* result. I used prompts to generate digital sketches that operated as background for paintings such as *Goya's Errors, RSG* or the *BBBQU*[4] drawings. In these cases, AI could

be understood as a prosthesis of the imagination, something like an "artificial imagination," that is, the production of "new" images after the human-computer relationship that brings together some references to Western art history or pop culture —algorithmically processed— with artistic gestures and their material drifts.

In parallel to the creation of these artworks, I experimented with the production or modification of "photographs" with AI. The operation is different from the one previously described, since —in my case— the "photographic" image resulting from the algorithmic action coincides with the *final work*, and does not require any more substantial modifications than improving the quality of the file or executing small reframings.

I used this method in the compositions called *Algorithmic Reimagination of the Queer Archive* (2022). The composition in particular inputs the image from the book *Homosexualismo e Endocrinología* (1938) by Leonidio Ribeiro, published in Brazil, in which two homosexuals detained by the police in Rio de Janeiro pose naked in front of a grid for the scientific lens that captures them. To reimagine this archive of techno-heterosexual violence on our continent[5] and propose a new version with the technologies of the present, I used a generative model that enabled me to combine the input image and a text prompt that described and, at the same time, made that image different. I selected two results that expressed these subtle differences with the

1. Felipe Rivas San Martín, *Una genealogía queer de los algoritmos computacionales* (A queer genealogy of computational algorithms). Doctoral thesis, Universitat Politècnica de València, 2022. https://riunet.upv.es/handle/10251/187463

2. My first experience with images and algorithms was with the series *The Neoliberal Dream* (2015), created when Google released the Deep Dream system, the result of experiments with its image interpretation algorithms. The exercise I carried out consisted in uploading an iconic photograph of the coup d'état in Chile and subjecting it to successive "interpretations" by the algorithm, until it became unrecognizable.

3. As is the case with the projects *Interface Paintings* (2010) or *Queer codes* (2011).

4. The acronym "RSG" brings together the different references that were included in the prompt to generate the painting's

digital sketch: a painting by Mark Rothko, a drawing by Egon Schiele and a painting by Francisco de Goya. The "BBBQU" acronym for the drawings refers to Francis Bacon, Bad Bunny, Queer, Ukiyo-e, included as prompt keys. The AI models used these keys by relating them to their databases, generating a digital sketch resulting from stylistic confrontations ranging from the abstract to the *figural*. In turn, this digital sketch served as a reference for paintings and drawings that, in their manual execution, introduced a series of pictorial and graphic derivations by the author, not produced as mere "copies" of the sketch.

5. The hormonal current that explained homosexuality was the most widespread paradigm in Latin America by authors such as Ribeiro and the Spaniard Gregorio Marañón.

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The Inexistent Archive

Biografías
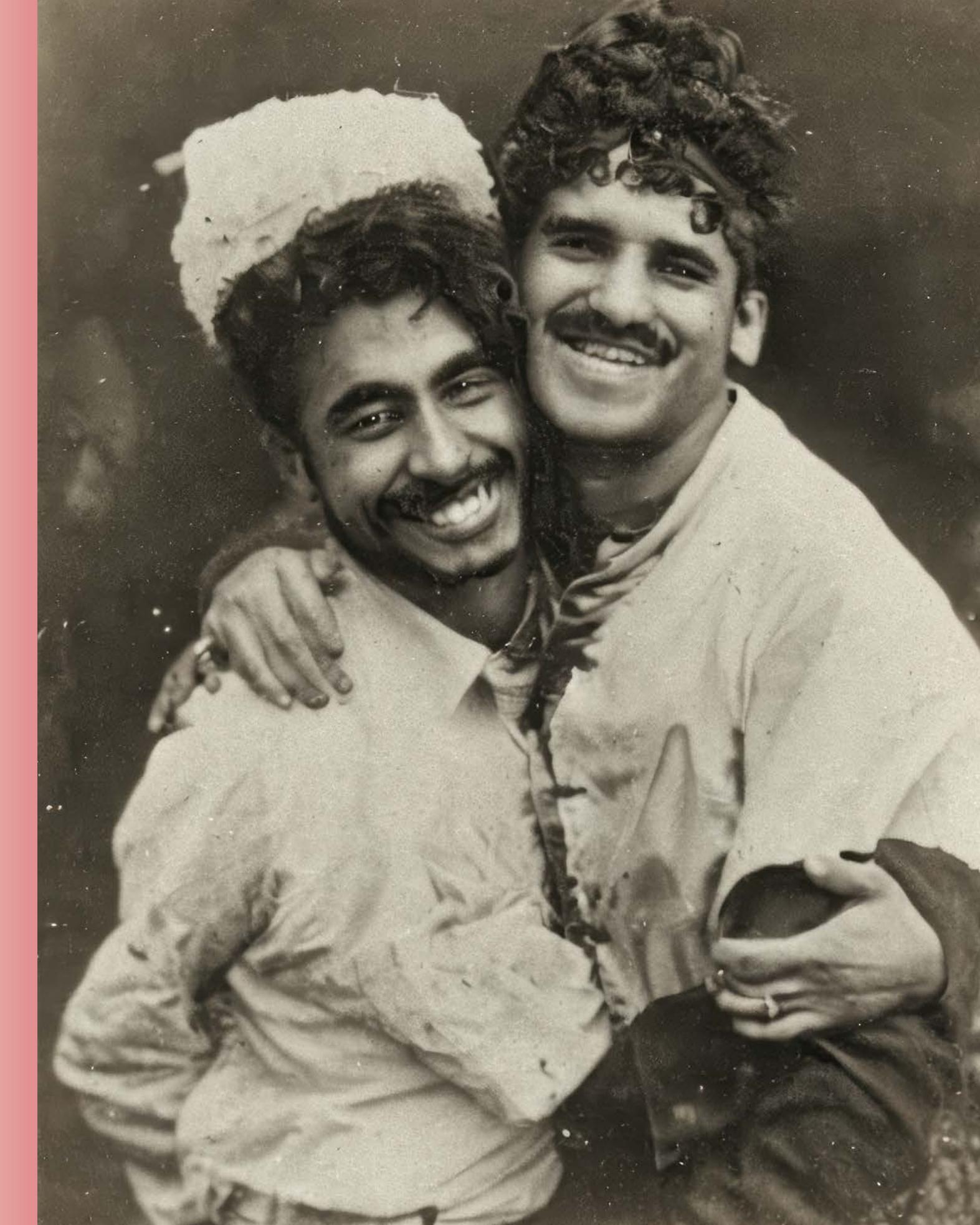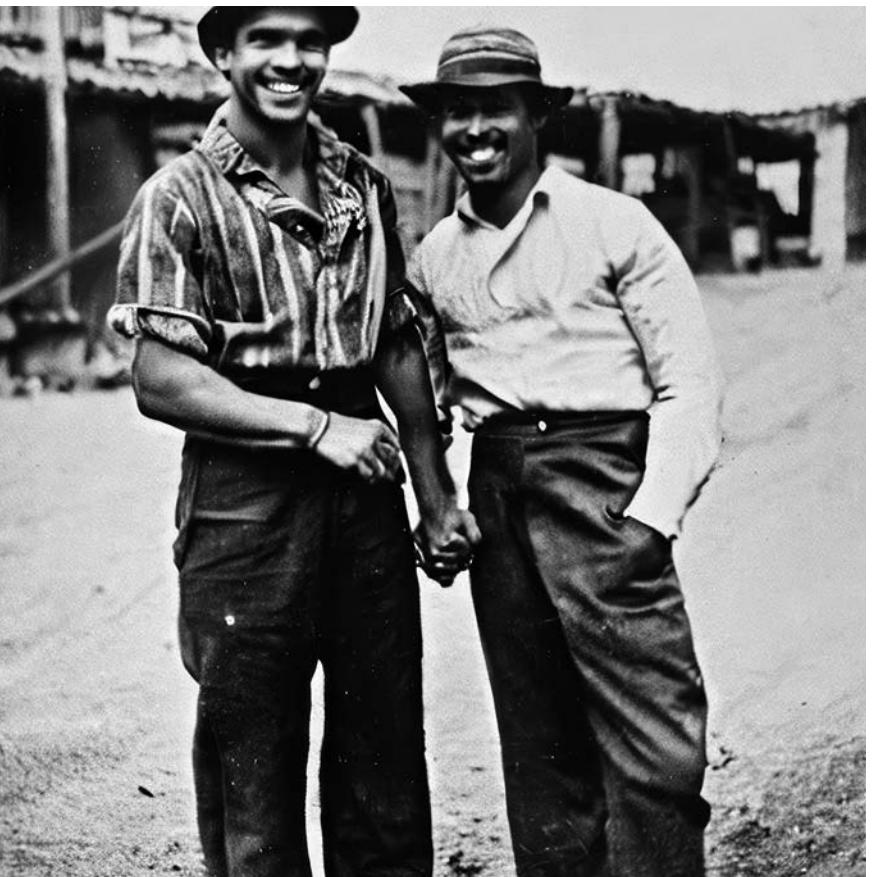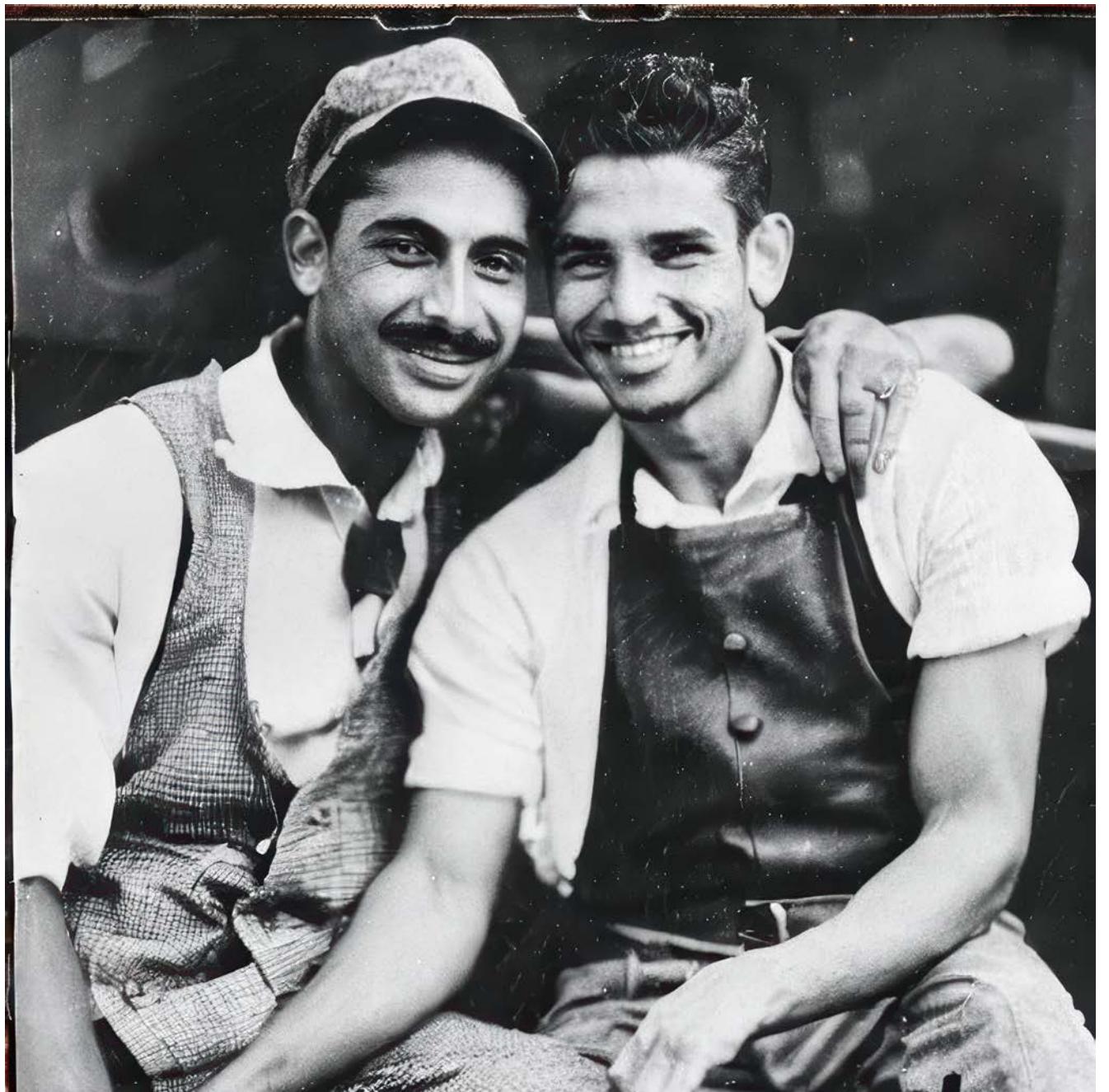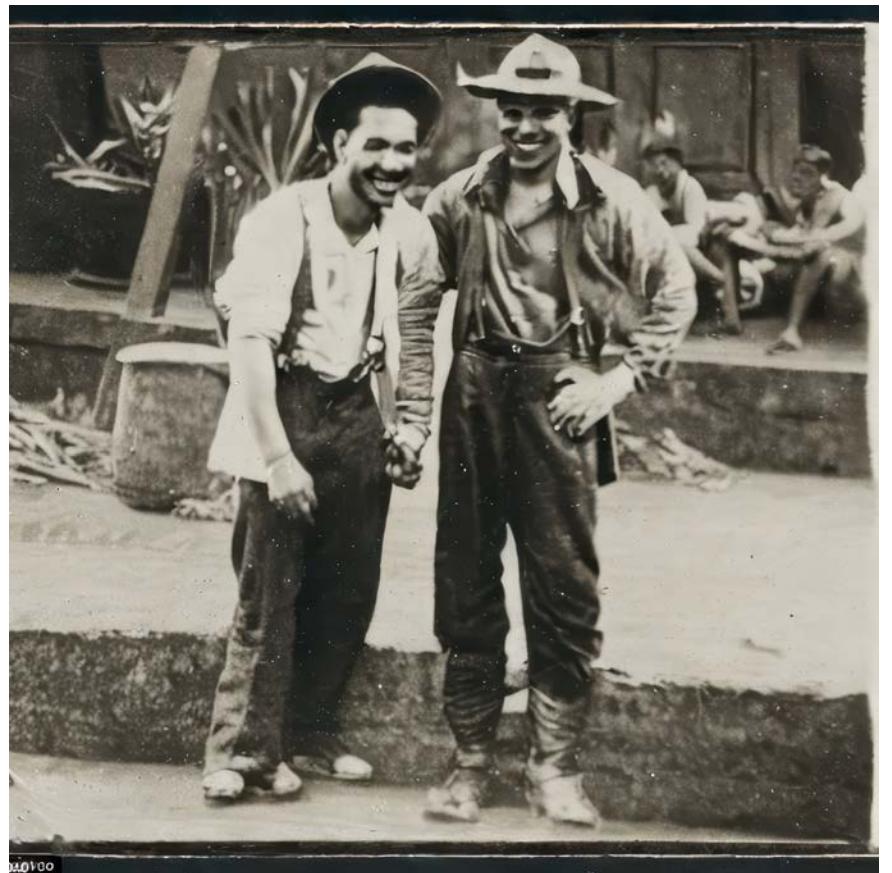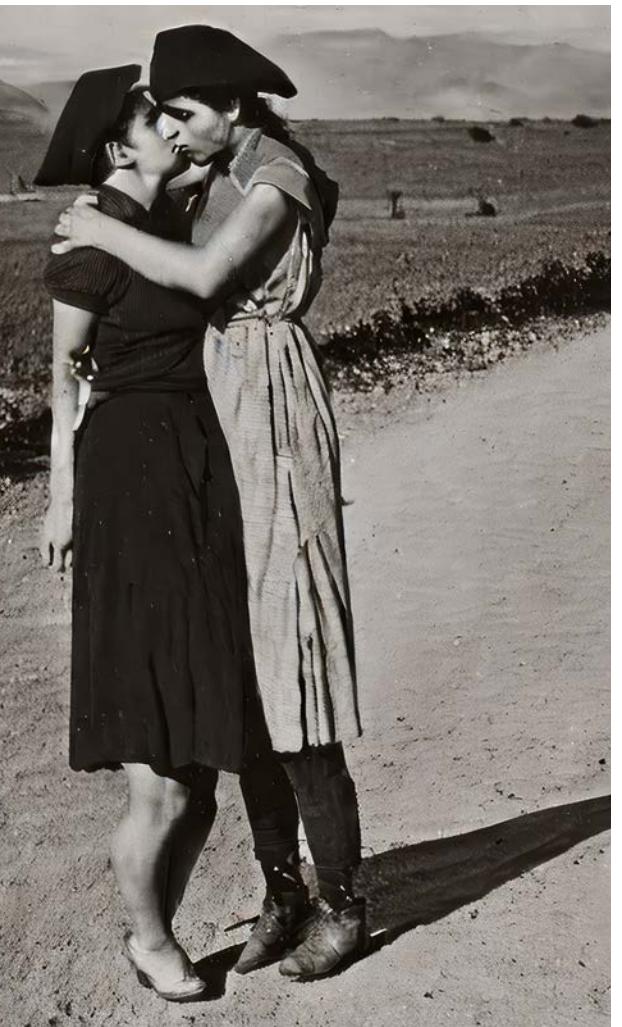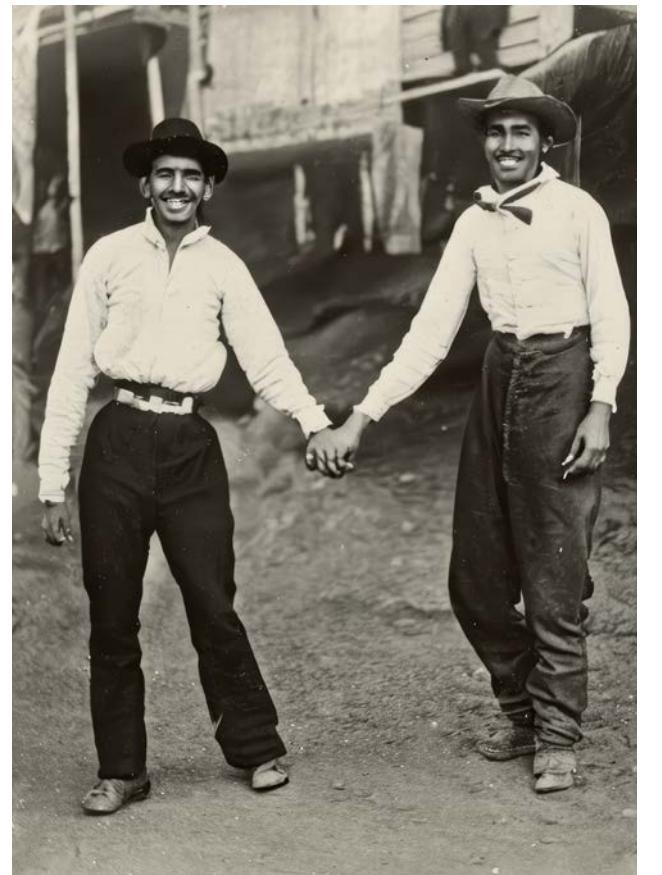
Eduardo Carrera Rivadeneira (Quito, 1987).
Curador, historiador del arte y gestor cultural, con especialización en enfoques decoloniales y *queer* aplicados a las prácticas artísticas. Actualmente es candidato a doctorado en Historia del Arte en la Universidad de Pensilvania, centrado en arte latinoamericano, latinx y *queer*. Posee una maestría en Gestión Cultural por la Universidad Internacional de Cataluña, es egresado del Programa de Estudios Independientes (PEI) del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona (MACBA) y tiene una licenciatura en Artes Visuales por la PUCE de Ecuador. En 2024 fue galardonado con la Curatorial Research Fellowship de Independent Curators International (ICI). Entre 2017 y 2022, fue Director y Curador del Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Quito, y en 2023, Director Artístico del Salón de Julio del Museo de Guayaquil. Es cofundador y exdirector de la plataforma No Lugar. Ha colaborado con instituciones como MoMA, PIVO São Paulo, Visual Aids, entre otras, y sus escritos han sido publicados en medios especializados.

Mariairis Flores Leiva (Marchigüe, 1990).
Magíster en Teoría e Historia del Arte de la Universidad de Chile. Es curadora de Espacio218 y columnista de las revistas *Artforum* y *Artishock*. Fue coordinadora de la Galería BECH entre los años 2017-2019. Coeditó, junto con Varinia Brodsky, el libro *Mujeres en las artes visuales en Chile 2010-2020* (MINCAP, 2021). Como investigadora fue parte del proyecto www.carlosleppe.cl; del libro y video *Arte y política 2005-2015 (fragmentos)* (Metales Pesados, 2018) dirigido por Nelly Richard; de la exposición *Mezza: Archivo liberado* curada por Sebastián Vidal ; de *Documentos críticos del arte chileno* del International Center for the Arts of the Americas at The Museum of Fine Arts en colaboración con Fundación AMA; y de la retrospectiva "Lotty Rosenfeld: entrecruces de la memoria", a cargo de Nelly Richard (MNBA, Parque de la Memoria y CC Matta, 2023-2024). Es autora del libro *Bajo el signo mujer. Exposiciones de artistas chilenas. 1973-1991* (Metales Pesados, 2024).

Felipe Rivas San Martín (Valdivia, 1982).
Artista visual chileno, ensayista y activista sexo-disidente. Doctor en Arte por la Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV), donde desarrolló el proyecto "Una genealogía queer de los algoritmos computacionales" con la dirección del crítico e historiador Juan Vicente Aliaga. Fue investigador postdoctoral en la Universidad de Santiago de Chile y actualmente es investigador postdoctoral de la Universitat Autònoma

de Barcelona, con la dirección de la filósofa Andrea Soto Calderón. Su trabajo emerge de la intersección entre la crítica *queer*, el problema de los archivos minoritarios y las tecnologías con una perspectiva desde el sur. Desarrolla una producción in-disciplinaria relacionando pintura, dibujo, performance, video, escritura, activismo e investigación. Sus obras forman parte de colecciones públicas y privadas como el Museo Reina Sofía (España); 21C Museum (USA); MUNTREF (Argentina); Colección del Ministerio de las Culturas de Chile; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo MAC de Chile, entre otros.
Es co-fundador del Colectivo Universitario de Disidencia Sexual, CUDS (2002-2019), grupo latinoamericano de activismo, experimentación artística y reflexión crítica. Forma parte del colectivo de arte y tecnologías Estudio San Martín. Es autor del libro *Internet, mon amour: infecciones queer/cuir entre digital y material* (Écfrasis ediciones, 2019) y co-autor (junto a Jaime San Martín) del libro de ciencia ficción experimental *Sacred Artificial* (ESM, 2023).

Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia (Santiago, 1990).
Magíster en Teoría e Historia del Arte de la Universidad de Chile. Es investigador, curador y editor de arte contemporáneo. Desde el año 2009 se ha dedicado a la investigación y puesta en valor de memorias y patrimonios culturales locales y latinoamericanos. Sus investigaciones, curadurías y publicaciones abordan principalmente estudios de recepción de imagen a través de archivos, colecciones y prácticas artísticas, museológicas y curatoriales.
Ha publicado *Del cuerpo al Archivo. Foto, video y libro-performance en Chile (1973-1990)* (Metales Pesados, 2022); *CENECA: Estudios para una transformación cultural (Studies for a Cultural Transformation)* [Coord.] (Metales Pesados-Écfrasis Ediciones, 2020); entre otros. Actualmente es Coordinador del área de Pensamiento y Ediciones del Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende y director de Écfrasis. Ha trabajado en el Archivo de Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (2019-2022), en el Archivo de Ronald Kay (2019-2021); en el proyecto ICAA del Museum of Fine Arts de Houston, USA (2019-2020) y en el Centro de Documentación de las Artes Visuales en Chile (2014-2018).

Biographies

Eduardo Carrera Rivadeneira (Quito, 1987).
Curator, art historian and cultural manager, specializing in decolonial and queer approaches applied to artistic practices. He is currently a PhD candidate in Art History at the University of Pennsylvania, focusing on Latin American, Latinx and queer art. He holds a Master's degree in Cultural Management from the International University of Catalonia, is a graduate of the Independent Studies Program (PEI) of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA) and has a degree in Visual Arts from PUCE in Ecuador. In 2024, he was awarded the Curatorial Research Fellowship from Independent Curators International (ICI). Between 2017 and 2022, he was Director and Curator of the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Quito, and in 2023, Artistic Director of the July Salon of the Museo de Guayaquil. He is co-founder and former director of the platform No Lugar. He has collaborated with institutions such as MoMA, PIVO São Paulo, Visual Aids, among others, and his writings have been published in specialized media.

Mariairis Flores Leiva (Marchigüe, 1990).
Master in Theory and History of Art from the University of Chile. She is curator of Espacio218 and columnist for *Artforum* and *Artishock* magazines. She was coordinator of BECH Gallery between 2017-2019. She co-edited, together with Varinia Brodsky, the book Mujeres en las artes visuales en Chile 2010-2020 (MIN-CAP, 2021). As a researcher she was part of the project www.carlosleppe.cl; of the book and video *Arte y política 2005-2015 (fragmentos)* (Metales Pesados, 2018) directed by Nelly Richard; of the exhibition *Mezza: Archivo liberado* curated by Sebastián Vidal ; of *Documentos críticos del arte chileno* del International Center for the Arts of the Americas at The Museum of Fine Arts in collaboration with Fundación AMA; and of the retrospective "Lotty Rosenfeld: entrecruces de la memoria", in charge of Nelly Richard (MNBA, Parque de la Memoria and CC Matta, 2023-2024). She is the author of the book *Bajo el signo mujer. Exposiciones de artistas chilenas. 1973-1991* (Metales Pesados, 2024).

Felipe Rivas San Martín (Valdivia, 1982).
Chilean visual artist, essayist and sex-dissident activist. D. in Art from the Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV), where he developed the project "Una genealogía queer de los algoritmos computacionales" under the direction of the critic and historian Juan Vicente Aliaga. He was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Santiago de Chile and is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, under the direction of philosopher Andrea Soto decir: Calderón. His work emerges from the intersection between queer criticism, the problem of minority archives and technologies with a southern perspective. He develops an in-disciplinary production relating painting, drawing, performance, video, writing, activism and research.His works are part of public and private collections such as the Reina Sofia Museum (Spain); 21C Museum (USA); MUNTREF (Argentina); Collection of the Ministry of Cultures of Chile; Museum of Contemporary Art MAC of Chile, among others.He is co-founder of the University Collective of Sexual Dissidence, CUDS (2002-2019), a Latin American group of activism, artistic experimentation and critical reflection. He is part of the art and technology collective Estudio San Martín. He

is the author of the book I*nternet, mon amour: infecciones queer/cuir entre digital y material* (Écfrasis ediciones, 2019) and co-author (with Jaime San Martín) of the experimental science fiction book *Sagrada Biblia Artificial* (ESM, 2023).

Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia (Santiago, 1990).
He holds a Master's degree in Theory and History of Art from the University of Chile. He is a researcher, curator and editor of contemporary art. Since 2009 he has been dedicated to the research and enhancement of memories and local and Latin American cultural heritage. His research, curatorial work and publications mainly address studies of image reception through archives, collections and artistic, museological and curatorial practices, and he has published *Del cuerpo al Archivo. Foto, video y libro-performance en Chile (1973-1990)* (Metales Pesados, 2022); *CENECA: Estudios Para Una Transformación Cultural (Studies for a Cultural Transformation)* [Coord.] (Metales Pesados-Écfrasis Ediciones, 2020); among others. He is currently Coordinator of the area of Thought and Editions of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende and director of Écfrasis. He has worked in the Archive of Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (2019-2022), in the Ronald Kay Archive (2019-2021); in the ICAA project of the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, USA (2019-2020) and in Centro de Documentación de las Artes Visuales en Chile (2014-2018).

Este libro deriva del proyecto *Un Archivo Inexistente* iniciado en el
año 2022 por el artista visual chileno Felipe Rivas San Martín.
Su archivo fotográfico está conformado por 108 imágenes creadas
con inteligencia artificial por el artista a través de los *software* Stable
Diffusion y Dall-E.
El proceso de edición de esta publicación se inició en marzo de 2024
bajo el sello editorial Écfrasis;
editado y diseñado por Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia.
Los textos de su interior fueron compuestos con la tipografía
Calluna; su interior está impreso con pantone 7423 C y negro en
papel couché opaco de 170 grs. con termolaminado opaco.
La tapa está forrada en papel Nettuno bianco de 140 grs.
y se terminó de imprimir en el mes de diciembre de 2024 en los
talleres de Andros Impresores.

— COLOPHON —

This book derives from the project *Un Archivo Inexistente* initiated
in 2022 by Chilean visual artist Felipe Rivas San Martín.
Its photographic archive is made up of 108
images created with artificial intelligence by the artist through the
software Stable Diffusion and Dall-E.
The editing process of this publication began in March 2024 under
the Écfrasis publishing label; edited and designed by Sebastián
Valenzuela-Valdivia. The texts inside were composed with Calluna
typography; its interior is printed with pantone 7423 C and black on
opaque couché paper of 170 grs. with opaque thermolaminate. The
cover is lined with Nettuno bianco 140 gsm paper and was finished
printing in December 2024 in the Andros Impresores workshops.

Un Archivo Inexistente es un falso repertorio de imágenes que aparentan ser fotografías antiguas de parejas LGBTIQA+, de clase trabajadora en América Latina. Mediante los efectos de simulación que proporciona la Inteligencia Artificial (IA), Felipe Rivas San Martín construye registros imposibles que no remiten a lo que existió delante de una cámara, sino que enfatizan el "esto no ha sido".

Los errores y deformaciones corporales propios de la IA actúan como evidencias de su carácter especulativo, evitando parecer auténticos registros que pretendan reescribir la historia y falsificar el pasado.

Este archivo ficticio nos habla de un mundo de experiencias que debió mantenerse oculto a la mirada ajena. Una conversión en tema del arte, en definitiva, de lo que la historia de la fotografía no contiene, de sus vacíos y ausencias.

Juan Martín Prada