Inclusive Spaces: Queer perspectives - cross-cultural experiences in physical and online space

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

Culture, heritage, development, queer, LGBTQ+, pride,

**SPEAKERS**

Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they), Ben Campkin (he/him), Regner Ramos (he/they), Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)

**00:33 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

Great. Welcome everyone, thank you for joining us today for the Inclusive Spaces seminar series at the Bartlett, the Faculty of the Built Environment here at UCL. Today you have joined the June edition of the series, entitled Queer Perspectives: Cross-cultural Experiences in Physical and Online Space.

My name is Claire, I’m a research student at the Bartlett focusing on queer practices of place-making, and I am co-hosting this event today with Ben Campkin, who is a co-director of the UCL Urban Laboratory and Professor in the Bartlett School of Architecture. Now together Ben and I have been working with others at the Bartlett to initiate a student and staff LGBTQIA network called BQueer. And as part of this, we are planning a series of events for the next academic year on the theme of queer-inclusive urbanism. And this series will connect queer and trans studies to urban studies and practices of urbanism. So keep your eyes peeled for that.

Before we begin, a little housekeeping, you might have heard the automated message at the start. But I do want to point out that this session is being recorded and will be added to the Faculty YouTube channel, the Bartlett EDI website, and forwarded to all of you that have registered today. We, of course, encourage you to submit questions to our speakers at any point. By clicking on the Q&A function on the bottom of the screen, you can submit your own questions or actually up-vote other people's questions.

Of course, as always, an hour is never quite enough, so I anticipate that we will not be able to get to all of your questions, but rest assured that any of - any of them that are not answered will be shared with our speakers, and we also encourage you to join the conversation online on social media by following the hashtag  #InclusiveSpaces, and I think that our speakers’ Twitter, Instagram handles will be shared in the chat.

So the format for today, we're of course going to first welcome Sharif and Regner to present for the first half of the session, and that will be followed by a Q&A before ending, I have been told, rather abruptly at 2pm. So let's kick things off.

**2:59 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

So we are really delighted to introduce our speakers, Dr Sharif Mowlabocus and Dr Regner Ramos, to talk about their new anthology, Queer Sites in Global Contexts: Technologies, Spaces and Otherness. So Dr Mowlabocus is an associate professor in the Department of Communication and Media Studies of Fordham University New York. His groundbreaking research has been located at the intersection of digital media studies and sexuality studies. He is the author of Gaydar Culture from 2010, which was really pioneering study of online gay culture, and he has another book on the way out with the title of Interrogating Homonormativity, which is due to be published in 2022.

Dr. Regner Ramos is associate professor of architecture at the University of Puerto Rico. His research on the relationship between queerness and space, including the really innovative and interdisciplinary PhD that he conducted here at the Bartlett, fosters experimental research methods and shifts between model-making, drawing and performative writing, and this is exemplified in in his current funded  project, Queertopia. Regner is the editor-in-chief of Informa Journal and the architecture editor at Glass magazine, and I should also mention he was the editor-at-large, of the amazing Lobby magazine, whilst at the Bartlett. And he's also co-director of Wet Hard agency. So we're really excited to welcome you both and really look forward to your talk, so over to you.

**4:36 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Thank you, everyone. Thank you, Bartlett, for inviting us. We’re going to have a quick chat about the book, and then we're just going to hand it over to Claire and Ben because we want to get to the conversation and get to your questions. But before we get started, what Sharif and I wanted to do was situate this project a little bit in terms of its scope, its format, and its locations. This project started as part of my funded project at the University of Puerto Rico, called Sites queer, where I was documenting and registering and thinking about queer spaces in in San Juan, Puerto Rico, the capital of the island. And had reached out to both Sharif and Ben with this idea of putting together a conference that would then become a book. And it was going to be a conference in a book about Grindr, but we became rather interested in - In a more diverse approach to queerness, where Grindr doesn't kind of just take over the whole discussion, and we were particularly interested in my position at the time, which is where I still am now, which is Puerto Rico. And how Puerto Rico, you never really hear about it in terms of queerness and in conversations about gender and sexuality and architecture.

So we put together this - this project, which has mutated from the conference to the book, and we're excited about what's going to happen in the future and we'll talk about that a bit later. And this is where we landed with the with the project.

This book comprises a collection of research-based texts that focus on different sites across the globe which are relevant to the LGBTQ+ community in those locations. More particularly, our book prioritises divergent histories, narratives, performances, and spatial practices of queer life in geographical and cultural contexts that are often othered by dominant queer theoretical studies in the West. As editors we have paid particular attention to include a diverse grouping of stories that destabilize hegemonic understandings which hitherto have lacked critical attention, and I’ll add this, particularly in architecture. So we're talking about female sex workers, people of color, indigenous populations, Latin communities, trans identities, migrants, among others. We argue that this is a necessary exercise in order to engage in a more thorough, situated, and nuanced discussion of queerness.

So throughout its 12 chapters, the book draws together work from a broad range of disciplines and showcases a variety of cross-cultural perspectives that foreground the experiences of these LGBTQ+ people living and moving through the Caribbean, South and North America, the Middle East and Asia. So when we did the conference one conversation that we - we needed to have, was where would this conference happen. And we discussed whether it's London, we discussed whether it's New York where Sharif is based, we discussed if it's Miami, which is the happy point between New York and Puerto Rico, and then it quickly became important that it happened here in Puerto Rico. And the reasons for this are both numerous and relevant to the political aims of this book.

The smallest of the Greater Antilles, Puerto Rico is a colonized island in the Caribbean over which the United States currently maintains political and fiscal control. Its inhabitants are and always have been second class citizens at a political level and continue to be denied the right to vote in the US presidential elections. The islands native populations, the Tainos, were brutalized, raped, enslaved and eventually wiped out by Spanish conquistadores who first landed on the island’s shores in 1493. Those sailing under the Spanish flag reached Puerto Rico traveling in the same vessels used to transport men and women who had been ripped from their African homeland, to be enslaved as part of Spain’s empire building mission. It was thus by these violent and dehumanizing means that Puerto Rico became a veritable melting pot of identities.

 Set against this history of trauma, displacement, colonization and enslavement, and sensitive to the ongoing social, political and economic issues faced by many of the islands’ inhabitants, the conference that we organized acknowledged both the island’s bilingual condition - Spanish and English - and its strategic geographic position. As a US territory Puerto Rico was able to politically host some nationalities, without the needs for visas, acting as a neutral non-combative space of encounter outside of the frictions of the mainland and where the island’s cultural history links it does so many other geographies with similar colonial pasts.

 One thing that is particular about the conference that both Sharif and I enjoyed, and we really wanted to extend to the book, was the fact that we had senior lecturers, then kind of seasoned academics presenting their work alongside some students who were doing their undergraduate work. We found that to be a really interesting dialogue and some of the most innovative research that we saw presented at the conference came from the younger, more junior scholars, and that's something that we wanted to extend into the book. So Sharif, maybe you want to say a little bit about that. I use this presentation format, because I don't want to do PowerPoint, I want to do performance today.

 **10:20 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Yeah, hi everyone, it’s wonderful to be here, thank you to the Bartlett School for hosting us, and to Nishat for all of the kind of back-end work to - to get things happening. And also thank you to Regner, actually, for bringing me on to this project, this is all him, the conference was him, and while Ben and I offered some kind of guidance, you know, this - this started with Regner and I really want to acknowledge that.

The conference itself brought together both senior and junior scholars, early career researchers, and seasoned professors and academics. But also, as well, activists, people who are kind of spanning the divide between academia and activism, and this is something that we wanted to try and take through into the book as well. It was an interesting decision, some people said, around this, and I think that there are certain hierarchies that are work within academic publishing but here's the thing. It was within those early career researchers’ work that we saw this willingness, this openness, perhaps even a demand to blend and experiment with digital and hybrid technologies and spaces in order to write, and I mean write in a in a variety of different ways. It was because of these early career scholars that we were able to bring in kind of a sense of native digitality to the project. You know these are scholars who come of age, at a time when barriers between academic and activist work are slowly crumbling. This is something that we wanted to get through in the book as well, and of course the precarity of the life of junior scholars can't be overlooked, right, I don't want to sort of romanticize away the material reality of higher education and the immense cost of that, but I also don't think that we should overlook the intellectual freedom and the energy and particularly the boldness that we often saw at the conference coming from our early career colleagues.

And, and so we wanted to bring that into the book. We also wanted to try our best to explore the performative dimension, to - to either try and translate the performative dimension of the conference, which was wonderful, I suppose, was a fantastic and very intense event wasn't only kind of spoken papers. It included variety of performative elements, there were artistic interventions, they were kind of activist proclamations and statements, there were drag shows, there were kind of round tables, there were installations and exhibitions. And so there was very much a focus, both in the conference and around the conference, on this kind of more performative, experimental and an innovative way of thinking.

Now of course that's really difficult to translate into a book. You know the book requires that certain elements be pinned down into a textual form and - and not all of the conference papers, conference presentations and performances were translatable into - into the book, but what we've tried to do is foster an approach to writing the book that kind of honors the performative. And in some cases that allows the text to be a little bit looser, or more transient while trying to capture the lived experience of the kind of the case studies and the informants  that appear in there.

The book also works at different scales, and this is something that we've really wanted to capture, this movement and this kind of crashing and colliding of global space, local space, the space of the individual body, of the city, of the locale and then of the nation as well, and so it moves between chapters and within chapters, it moves in different scales, and I want to pull out just a few examples here, so, for instance Ben Campkin’s work on the large-scale infrastructure project that is Crossrail, in London, is a great example of how the infrastructural spaces and the infrastructure projects of a capital city also then impact and rework notions of normativity and homonormativity, often at the expense of other non-heterosexual identities. Then we might think you know, scaling further than the city, to the work of Jody Liu, Jody’s offered as a fantastic chapter looking at SESTA/FOSTA, the anti-sex work and anti-sex trafficking legislation in the US, and so this is working at the space and the level of a nation state and the controlling of bodies, through this legislation. What Jody’s work does is pick out how the carceral politics and a carceral feminism plays out, both at the level of abstract legal philosophy, but also then literally touches the bodies of queer people of color and particularly trans women of color.

And then from those kind of larger spaces, we move into to kind of both regional spaces, in particular Khaliden Alsaleh work around the Arabian Peninsula, but then also specific religious spaces as well, so for instance Khaliden’s work looks at the spaces and the of homes and mosques in the Arabian Peninsula, and looks at the ways in which bodies are surveyed in different locations of bodies, regulated by the homosociality of these particular institutions. But those bodies passing in order to form digital spaces within those physical spaces, spaces of play, negotiation and resistance.

And then, of course, we must also think of the space of the domestic as well, and we can think of Ged Ribas’s work, their project on trans migrants, transgender migrants moving to Berlin is framed around the concept of the House Projects, these are semi-permanent, semi-autonomous squatter spaces that contain and hold lives that are often in transition in every sense of the word, and so we wanted to kind of move through these different - these different registers at different scales of space in order to identify the ways in which the global becomes the local, the local then translates that in order to produce performances. and one such performance element would be Liliana Macias work, where she looks at Cabaret Parodia. This is the formation of a very transient space, a very fragile space, the space of performance, and the ways in which these spaces are created as forms of resistance. Cabaret Parodia is a Spanish-language drag show that is performed both in the gender-normative spaces of working-class LatinX communities in Chicago, but then also gets translated into spaces of highly white, white supremacist spaces of Boystown in Chicago, and so we see also even in the transient the ways in which we are we're acknowledging this collapsing, of the global and the local.

 I’m going to hand back over here to Regner now to talk a little bit about the different writing methods we've also been able to capture in the book.

**18:48 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Circling back to this idea of performativity, there is also an element of that in the different writing methods that we wanted to pursue in the book so, for instance we'll start with mine. I write in a very fragmented mode and I’m borrowing these ideas from Jane Rendell, who also is a part of the Bartlett, where I take stories of places throughout using different perspectives. And, depending on how the text is laid and what its typographical elements are, they kind of clash with each other and interrupt each other, but they kind of create an alternate way of telling a story about a place or architecture, and this is one example of how I do it on my own research website. We also have this project called Hear Here, it's a chapter in the book, by Ariel Beaujot and Victor Macias Gonzalez and they've got this really interesting project situated in this small midwestern town called Lacrosse, and they're mapping stories using audio narrations. We created this map where you can view the full story, or you could listen to the full story.

And of course Queering the Map, which is Lucas LaRochelle’s project, and it's become such a huge success. They're part of the book as well, and Queering the Map, what it does is it creates a register of queer sentiments, emotion, nostalgia, memories situated to particular places, not just in where the project started in Canada, but it's you can see it's got thousands and thousands of thousands and thousands of stories all across the world, dropped into bodies of water, in the most diverse group of - of geographies that you could imagine, so we have stuff that's experimental like this idea of queering site writing, the historical and the archival like in the case of Hear Here, and this anecdotal mode of telling - of telling one’s biography which is Lucas’s project.

**20:53 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Thanks Regner. So in terms of how the chapters were organized, we really struggled a little bit actually, there was a sense that we need to try and conform to a particular organization, with sections and - and hard and fast themes, and actually as we started to work through this we recognized this absolutely wasn't going to be the case, because we are still understanding and uncovering and revealing the different themes that run across the chapters in different ways, so they became a jigsaw puzzle that we were continually kind of building and then taking apart and rebuilding again. And that's something that we’ll return to shortly. But the chapters therefore stands on their own and also work in conversation with one another, and they're primarily organized around technological and spatial case studies so, for instance on the screen here, you can see the website for an anti-discrimination campaign, known as Kindr, which was launched by the gay dating and hook up app Grindr, and I use this as one of my - as a case study to explore the politics of politeness which I suggest, our homonormative and which continue to frame the issue of race, through distinctly white, middle-class and cis-gendered forms of being. And so I kind of am exploring the ways in which not just Grindr but other apps as well, so, for instance, we might think about apps such as Blued, apps such as Scruff, so on and so forth, the ways in which a particular understanding of race and racism is re-interpellated and re-organized through normative politics.

Other spaces, that a digital would of course include Hear Here and Queering the Map, which Regner has spoken of as well, if anyone hasn't checked out Queering the Map, which was developed by Lucas LaRochelle, please do so, it's a - it's a fantastic resource and what's really interesting in the article, in the chatter that Lucas has prepared for us, is the way in which he suggests you read the map, and he suggested kind of a process of disorientation and losing oneself within it, in order to kind of get this sense of queerness and loss and isolation and mobility and movement. There's a really lovely way of kind of thinking about not reading maps or re-reading maps in different ways.

Then of course there are physical, purely physical sites or primarily physical sites, so we might think of the Kenwood Ladies’ Pond. Lo Marshall, obviously - also of the Bartlett School of Architecture as well, offered us a fantastic chapter and that looked at, kind of began with the media coverage of the kind of “trans scare” of - around the ladies,’ Kenwood Ladies’ Pond and looked at the ways in which the pastoral and this kind of very, almost ethereal space has historically been connected with a particular vision of middle-class white cis-gendered femininity. And how that has actually served to obscure other bodies’ subjectivities and identities who have used that spaces.

I’ve also already mentioned the idea of the Crossrail project, the House project. And - and San Juan as well, I really want to kind of big up Regner’s amazing kind of site specific work where he's kind of taking us through how the transient spaces of San Juan queer life operate at a kind of hybrid scale.

And then we've got those interventions as well, interventions into space, spaces that are claimed and reclaimed, and temporarily appropriated by particular queer folk in order to make a statement, so Cabaret Parodia, would one would be one, with Un Pozole con la Frida as one example, and I want to finish this section by talking also about one other Particular intervention, and that is of Djan Kaw (??).

Now full disclosure, there are those times when you're working on a project and for whatever reasons, you know, you lose a chapter and you think what am I going to do, where are we going to go? And then into our lap falls this wonderful, wonderful piece of work that was offered us by Eduardo En Mabia, and this is a case study of a person living in Quilombo in Brazil, and I want to finish with this, because Djan Kaw fits into all of those categories I was just talking about in many respects, actually brings all of the themes of the book together.

She/he helps to untie the connections, these connections, formalities and reformulate them. So just to very briefly explain, Djan Kaw lives in the Quilombo, and a Quilombo, is a space that was traditionally created by and for Afro-Caribbean forced migrants to Brazil, so enslaved people, and occupying these spaces. Now these spaces are legally recognized but continue to face forms of judicial and extrajudicial violence and trauma as that space is re-appropriated for commercial means.

What's really interesting is the way in which Djan Kaw, in this space, a trans-identified Afro-Caribbean individual, uses the global platform of Instagram, okay, a platform developed in Silicon Valley, thousands of miles away, in order to connect their own understandings and identities with a global audience as well. So there’s a smashing together here of the micro and the macro of the Global North and the Global South, and it doesn't render this divide irrelevant, right, we're not talking about some kind of kind of post-structural breaking down of these material realities, absolutely not, because to do so would be to blind oneself to the very material reality of the Quilombo, but it does reveal the constructive nature of that north/south divide and the ways in which these technologies are offering opportunities to challenge and to queer that.

And so Djan Kaw, through their performances on Instagram, operates and operationalizes a project of deconstruction, a project of performance and of reconstruction. And we're so happy to be able to include this wonderful kind of, you know chapter, and the analysis of Djan Kaw’s performances, because in many ways it kind of speaks to all the themes that we, we have tried to raise within this. And those themes that we've highlighted, you know it very much focus on the concepts of hostile environments, whether that be the environment of racism or various phobias, but also the - the challenging politics of spaces of supposed safety that turn hostile through a lack of awareness, or a refusal to engage in the politics of intersectionality.

And then also I think another thing that we've been exploring in the book is that of spatial practices, the carving out of spaces, so the book really explores the different ways in which both physically, performatively and also digitally, there is a carving out of spaces for existence, for resistance and for playfulness within the lives of the queer folk who feature in the book, of passing and playing, and rupturing spaces of normativity.

**29:27 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Now that the book is out and we've seen it kind of change formats, and - and I don't know, we were kind of thinking about where do - where do we go, what's the future direction for us, and we're really interested in how to do these things that Sharif was mentioning, how - there's no order to them, but really you can read the material alongside the chapters and come up with new interpretations. And so we're thinking about how to take that forward because we paired them and kind of structured them in a specific order in the book, which wasn't really ordered, but we got thinking about is there a second book here, is there a different conference and we're going to be doing – Sharif, should I mention it or would you like to -

**30:13 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Please do.

**30:15 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

We thought that the best way to move the book forward - because we had this really nice book launch where we invited the contributors, we invited close friends, and we asked some of our friends who are designers and artists and researchers to pick a chapter of the book and react to it, and whatever method they wanted to, so we had Djan Kaw do a performance, we had people do mappings, we had people do audio-visual and video images, and it was really interesting to see how they were digesting the material. We obviously we had this platform, today, which was super important because it was more that kind of like, the academic presentation of the book, and then we started thinking about what are the possibilities of regrouping these chapters together and launching a - a virtual reading group in the fall of 2021, so we're going to be having four sessions and we're going to be inviting.

Each session will have two authors or two chapters of the book, and we're going to be reading those two chapters alongside them. Some of them - they've been paired in terms of, session one is living in hostile environments so it's about trans and queer people of color, the second session will be the spaces of queerness and we'll be talking about mapping as a research method, the third session will be about race and racism and gay male culture, and the fourth session will be about trans experiences. Non-white - focusing on non-white locations and we're really excited to see what material comes out of this. We're particularly interested in having graduate students and advanced undergraduate students and postgrad students join us to see how they understand the material put forward, what they're doing, and maybe we can offer ways to think through different methodologies and - and offer any kind of input that we can, and see where that takes us and if anyone is interested in joining this you can find all the info and the registration info is on my site, which ELSite.xyd, and you have exactly what's happening, when it's happening, what time and the registration for all of them. And I think that we're going to hand it over now to Ben and Claire so that we can have a chat.

**32:37 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Thank you so much, that was really excellent overview of the book and really conveyed some of the energy and excitement that's contained in the book, but also from the conference. I really enjoyed the way that you took us through the different media and methods, as well as the content of the contributions, and I think it really conveys this dynamism that you've captured. And you know, managed to generate from thinking through queer sites from San Juan through the theme of technology, but interpreting that in lots of different ways and lots of different geographical contexts. So you know, of course, we only have a limited amount of time, but we do want to invite people if they have questions to post them in the Q&A.

And perhaps if I could start with a question and, if I could ask Sharif and Regner to try and keep their answers concise, so that we can try and address some of the audience's questions as well, that'd be great. So I guess one question that I was wondering is, with this global framing of the book, which is a really important intervention in the western-dominated canon around queerness and queer space in particular. And thinking about this through othered places, but also othered subjectivities, and across different media and practices, I was wondering what the process of compiling the collection reinforced for you about the potentials, and also the complexities of doing that work, because you kind of made it sound - you know, in a way, seamless in your presentation there, but what - what kind of - what might be the complexities of doing that, whether they be ethical or linguistic or institutional, or thinking about different histories, I was just wondering if you had any comments on that in terms of your - Your process of learning through the book, and I ask this because, personally I learned a lot through thinking about my own work in relation to your brief for the conference and the book and thinking about what are the sort of global dimensions of our city, in London, so yeah, I just wondered if you have any thoughts on that after completing the book.

**34:48 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Are you happy for me to go, Regner? That's okay. Yeah, I’ve been - thank you so much for that question, now, I’ll try and be as brief as possible - and one of the things that I think whenever you do use that word, global, you start thinking about, is oh my God, I’m not capturing the global, like we didn't have a contribution in the book from Australasia, or that we did have representation at the conference, trying to take a UN approach, as it were, it just doesn't work. But at the same time also there's a real danger in focusing on the - in focusing on the global, in suggesting that this is basically the Global South, as it were, when in fact projects such as mine and yours, and Lo’s, demonstrates that actually when we need to think about, for instance, the question of queerness and otherness, we also need to think about the ways in which that isn't represented fully within, for instance, the Western canon as well, right, so you know, within the spaces of London or within the spaces of kind of, you know - digitally normative gay male space and so on and so forth, so there were - there were - there was constantly this issue that we faced about inclusivity and inclusion and what does that mean. That's not something that we ever really fully resolved, other than saying so maybe we'll think about volume two, maybe that's what we're addressing in the next volume.

But there were some practical challenges. This book is published in English, this is not something that we were necessarily happy about, the title of the book, even, is something that we had to go back and forth on, and we lost the argument on this, and we have asked for this to be made available in the Spanish language as well. This is where we butt up against particular kind of hegemonies of language, and it is something that we have not yet fully resolved in some respects, and I think Regner would agree with me when I say there's almost a sense of well, let's see what we can sell it in English and then we'll see whether there's a market in a different language, but It is something that I feel is still unresolved within the book in terms of that.

And then in terms of the ethics as well, you know, this - it's being able to do this kind of research and activism and work really does depend on the institution, but also the region that you're - you're based within, and it's not surprising that some of our work is being produced so, for instance Khaliden’s work, which is about the Arabian Peninsula, is actually being produced in a UK university so there's also this issue about diasporas of activism and academia that we also have to kind of bear in mind, hopefully, that - that's the question, was there anything that you wanted to say Regner, or we should we move on? Okay.

**37:40 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

That's brilliant, thank you so much. I’m struck by the idea of an anthology is actually a place where you can have an approach which isn't about resolving things necessarily, but opening up the conversation. So thanks very much, I know that Lo Marshall who is - Dr Lo Marshall, who’s based also at the Urban Lab and contributed to the conference and the book, has also joined us. And Sharif mentioned Lo’s chapter, I wondered whether you wanted to say anything, hi, Lo, I wonder whether you wanted to say anything more about your chapter or whether you had any comments or reflections on the project from your perspective.

**38:23 Lo Marshall**

Thanks so much, and thanks for inviting me to jump in, it's been so nice to hear you both talk about the book, and the work, and the process, and your thoughts behind everything, and to think back upon that conference that seems like such a long time ago now, when we could like, travel safely and things like that. And thank you so much, Sharif, for your really generous overview of my chapter. I'm not sure how much I can top that, but I suppose it's really nice to have something - this like very quintessentially kind of English, which is really this kind of white English pastoral space, right, sit alongside this book, which is a global in its context, so it becomes particularized, I think that's really important.

And you know it was really interesting - actually the conference was really formative in my writing, this became a PhD chapter. And it was really, the conference was really formative in my thinking about that, about how this weird space, you know, usually in the trans debate it’s general spaces, it’s toilets, it's changing rooms at schools. How this very particular space, what is it about this space, that becomes so instrumentalist within these discourses both for and against trans inclusion, I think, thinking about the spatial in that way, in the role of urban imaginaries, the way that they're gendered and racialized. Yeah, I mean I hope it's quite generative in thinking around that, and actually I think it really makes sense in this - where it sits in the book, it really makes sense of the chapter in a really nice way. So yeah, thank you for including me, I don't know if there's anything else to reflect on.

**39:56 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Brilliant, thanks Lo.

So I think at this point we have got some questions that are coming through in the Q&A, so we will do our best to go through some of those now. And I’ve noticed that there's a couple that are interested in how the sort of different media that you're dealing with in all of these different projects, and that you presented the, through the really dynamic visual presentation, how that diversity of media and materiality translate in the context of the book, how did you think about that and work with that. I hope I’m – people have written that much more eloquently than I just said, but - and also just dealing with you know social media and these discourses around queer space in relation to different media, and how does that translate into the content (??) of the book. Is there anything you’d like to add on that?

**40:54 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

I read the question and I think it's a fantastic question. I’m not sure if Sharif would agree, I think that it doesn't translate. I think that you can't - especially with a publishing house like Routledge, even like Sharif mentioned it, we didn't even have control over the title of the book, we didn't have control over the cover image of the book, it's - it's what the institution says, and the format is so tight, the amount of words you can print, we didn't even find out how many images we could include, so I think that's why Sharif and I are interested in in fostering a series of events, reading groups, maybe another conference, a different iteration, to see how this - the richness of the material, we can think through it.

Often books, I think, are thought of as an output, you finished writing, you’ve finished the research, you put into the book, and you're done and people buy it and that’s it. But we're really thinking about the energy that this material has and that the research had, and how much it's going to change, I’m sure that the people who, who wrote their chapter of the book, now two years on - It writing chapter, it has changed as well. So I think that maybe, what we need to do, and this goes back to my fragmented way of writing and seeing things, is to not think of the book as the sole output, but rather as a fragment of the work that is complemented by these other things, that the book can't capture. Maybe there are different ways of trying that with book and ebooks and whatnot. But I think that for us we're interested in in the idea of the satellite of this project and then having these little satellites that kind of connect to it and that allow for their - each particularity to shine.

**42:43 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Wonderful, thank you very much. Is there anything you wanted to add on that, Sharif?

**42:46 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

I just - I mean I would, Regner’s being - I agree with Regner and I’m also going to push back and say that I actually think that Regner does a fantastic job in his chapter, as does - As does Lucas La Rochelle in - in trying to get that performance. One of the things that some of the chapters do offer is this disorientation. And this - this fragmentation that comes through, you know, which gives you a sense of the - Not just the different media, but also the ruptures between them and I think that's - that's been great, so you know, I know Regner wouldn't say that, but you know I will say that for him, but also, I really hope that actually the reading group and the other initiatives that, you know, we're thinking about, actually people then start to bring in and say no, actually, I think we should be refiguring this and so on and so forth, which brings on and helps to kind of continue this - this conversation.

**43:41 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Great, thanks. Claire.

**43:43 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

Thanks Ben, and thanks Sharif, Regner, and Lo for - for really providing such depth and breadth to this book, I know that's no mean feat in 20-something minutes so it's much appreciated.

I think something I really want to tease out is something you spoke about just now, but also as part of your introduction, and it's this commitment to empowering researchers who are developing queer research, and actually we've had a question in the chat. By Pepe who says that, as a recent architecture masters graduate, do you have any recommendations to pursue a career in queer spatial research?

And I had, I had a similar question which was along the lines of, if you could write to your younger self or if you were advising students today, what would you highlight, as both enriching or difficult about doing queer research in higher education, and this can perhaps be generally, or within your own disparate disciplines.

**44:50 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Where's that question, Claire?

**44:53 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

So it was - it was just in the, I think it might be in your answered section now, you can see the Q&A.

**45:02 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Could please share this experience and…

**45:05 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

If you scroll down.

**45:07 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

“I’m a recent architecture masters graduates wants to pursue a career in queer spatial research.” Yeah, I think that is a very big question, and maybe what you - what would be helpful, is to find out what is of interest to you, what is your particular research interest, and I think that reaching out to the people that you - that you've read or the people that you've engaged with their work, they’re a lot more susceptible to saying yes to having a chat and brainstorming through a few ideas, and that, I think it's – every - every field is very different, it depends where you want to do the research, it depends on what it is.

And I think for me personally, the Bartlett, you know, it was a UK institution. and in the Bartlett is very experimental and has a load of diversity in terms of the research that is considered research. And in my case, it was kind of like coming into this super English context, and having to not be so Caribbean and Latino and loud and kind of expressive, and really learn how - how to write research. And it wasn't until I finished and my Viva that I kind of learned that, okay, now I can let go, my research can be queer, in itself, I don't think that you ever stop learning how to be queer, I think that if you - it's a constant process of challenging yourself, and relearning and - and forgetting things as well, so my suggestion would be, find the people who you admire or who are relevant to the things that you're interested in, reach out to them. Send them an email and say I would love to talk to you about this idea that I have and pick your brain, and I’m sure that you're going to get people who are going to totally be up for it.

**46:56 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Yeah, I would just - I would just add to that, I mean, because you know, Regner approached me, you know and - and was incredibly flattering, which always helps with an ego like mine, but also Regner came with an idea, and that, for me, is always the most important thing. You know, where something is like I can't say no, right, like this is such an attractive idea, this is so interesting, you know I really have to kind of engage with that, so I think that it's - it's the ideas that you have that you take to the people that you want to work with, you know can be really - and sometimes they don't have the capacity, you know, it often - a lot of the time it's fate when it comes to that kind of thing, but - but you, you are your ideas and taking that to the person, I think, is really important.

**47:45 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Thank you, I think we have time for maybe one or two more questions and we've got some really interesting ones coming in.

I was wondering whether you could address this question there’s somebody called Michael Pickett who’s asked this question around, really how you're thinking about otherness, which I think is really interesting, in the in relation to worldness or global culture, so how did, how did you approach otherness.

**48:16 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Regner, do you mind if I start? Yeah, I mean, Michael, thank you so much for your - for your question. I think that's it's a really - we were very, very expansive in our understanding of otherness, and one of the things, I suppose that we wanted to - the only kind of guideline that we had was that we wanted to look at, I suppose, for want of a better phrase, that kind of, you know otherness as being refracted through the lens of normativity. So whether, you know - and that gets us back to this, this different way and more complex way of thinking about the global. So, you know, otherness comes through in – in the situation of Lo’s fantastic chapter, which I absolutely love, because for me actually otherness gets rendered through the Kenwood Ladies’ Pond because the more I read Lo’s work and that chapter again – again, I feel like Kenwood Ladies’ Pond is actually a colonialist project, right, of white supremacy and gender supremacy – cisgender supremacy, that then, you know, produces this kind of otherness, so I think the other issue you also mentioned, kind of, you know, the lack of - scrolling up to find out the question.

**49:33 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Actually, it’s moved. Actually, just to interject and say that I didn't actually pose all of the question, but it is really interesting the other aspects of the question, the anthropology side of commonality or is there a lack of queer world culture??

**49:50 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Yeah, actually I don't think that that's something that we did explore, and I think that's actually something that I would hope that going forward, you know, this - the book keeps opening itself up, and Michael, that's such a great question because I think actually there are commonalities with - within it, but we haven't thought about it in an anthropological sense, we thought about it thematically but not anthropologically and I think that there could be some further work to be done there, to think about queer world culture, definitely. Regner, was there anything that you wanted to - to add there?

**50:22 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

No, I think I was just going to write in the chat, that there's a bunch of really interesting questions that we won't have time to address, but I’m going to be answering them in video format on my Instagram, so if you just copy and paste the question if we don't have time to answer it, I’ll - and also by Twitter, whatever is easiest for you, we're super happy to continue the conversation going.

**50:46 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

That's really generous of you, thank you Regner. Some of the questions we will pick up if they're related to Bartlett activities as well.

I think those comments were really insightful, Sharif, and the question around queer world culture just seems really fascinating in terms of how the book prompts us to think more about this. You know, because there is this, you know, there’s a debate around the kind of export, near colonial export of LGBT identities, and the kind of global gay, white, unmarked, white cis male figure, but also we're in this moment of the pandemic and there are all of these possibilities for global connectivity and for activisms in different places to - to link up, so it does seem really pretty timely that, you know - that was – your work was way before that historical context, but it's opened up these new opportunities that I’m sure will come out in the reading group that you're organizing, which sounds really exciting.

We are going to have to wrap up in a second. Claire, did you want to ask one - did you want to pick up on any of the other questions or…

**52:02 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

Yeah, I'd love to, I actually have a ton of questions so if I’m to pick one I’d actually like to pick Bobae Lee’s question in the chat, which is, I am wondering if there were intertwined factors between online spaces, physical spaces, but also individual bodily space, and any findings or insights that you might want to share with us.

**52:28 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

I’m so sorry, could you repeat that question?

**52:31 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

Did I drop out, I've had patchy internet.

**52:33 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

No I was, I was doing that terrible thing of answering someone else's question in the chat.

**52:39 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

No worries, it's just – it’s a question that's come in from Bobae Lee that's asked us to expand a little bit more on the intertwined factors between online space, physical space, and bodily space and maybe just to speak to that a little bit.

**52:55 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

One thing that we - we encountered this when we were initially thinking about the book and having it in section, that we were thinking about a section on technology, a section on otherness, a section on space, but some of the chapters dealt with these things together, and it was really impossible to kind of categorize them. And I think Sharif mentioned Djan Kaw when we finished talking about the different chapters of the book and that particular chapter, which we also really like the idea of having a chapter dedicated to one person, it's not about a group of people - I mean it is, but it's also about the singular story of Djan Kaw, as this trans Quilombo, Instagram user, and it's - you can't talk about Djan Kaw without talking about Instagram, without talking about the space of the Quilombo and Brazil, so I think that that's what is particularly queer about what we're trying to do in the chapter, and I think that query is very - we do have categories for different types of queer, I suppose, but really they're just words. Queer as much more messy and I think that that's where we - where we would like to continue taking the book forward, is through playing with this idea of the mess, of kind of dividing - blurring the borders between things, because we – Djan Kaw was inseparable from all these three things.

In my chapter I think as well, the fact that I am a researcher talking about the space that's next to my apartment, my unwillingness to talk about it in the third person. And - and just, it's a space that I’m in, it's part of my life, it's the space of my friends go in, so you are embedded, your body is embedded through a lot of these chapters, through your personal experiences, we allow for auto-ethnographical and autobiographical types of writing as well. So I think that that's, I think one of the things that we learned is the categories, sometimes aren't helpful.

**54:54 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Yeah, and I think actually If I could just - Bobby you, you mentioned the word memory, and I think that that's actually the fourth category thinking about it, that we could have had in in this. Because actually in so many ways the concept of memory, memory marking spaces, whether it be in the House projects and people recycling material, whether it be the hidden memories and the last histories at the - at the, you know in San Juan’s queer spaces, or at the Kenwood Ladies’ Pond or, indeed, you know in, in Central London. You know, or whether it be kind of responses to ephemeral forms of racism that don't linger but, nevertheless, are kind of like - you kind of like sort of re-imagine through anti-discrimination campaigns, I think memory is actually what links a lot of these together so, even though these are performances and ways of being and living, there are also ways of memorializing, you know, however, informal that might be.

**55:54 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Wonderful, thank you so much. That's been a really exciting conversation and just I think shows that the reading group that you've been talking about is going to be really fruitful. Claire, did you want to add anything? We may be running out of time, I think.

**56:13 Claire Tunnacliffe (she/they)**

Just five seconds, I’ve loved this, I wish we had another two-three hours, just to chat but I’m going to show up to the reading group. And I can't wait for it, and thank you so much for today and for letting us come a little bit closer to the work in this way, it's been a real pleasure.

**56:29 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Absolutely, thank you for having us and everyone for coming.

**56:34 Ben Campkin (he/him)**

Thanks, from me, too, and congratulations on the book, it's an excellent book and thank you also to Lo for joining us.

And may I also please thank Nishat who's been helping organize this event, and Steve, and also Kamna Patel who's our Vice Dean, who initiated the Inclusive Spaces series and has generously supported this event. So thank you very much for coming and, as we said, we will do our best to follow up with questions that haven't been answered, thanks for your engagement.

And everybody, I think, will receive an email as follow-up to the event and we'll make it clear how to - how to continue the conversation with the various links that have been mentioned, so thanks everyone.

**57:21 Regner Ramos (he/they)**

Thank you very much, happy Pride.

**57:25 Sharif Mowlabocus (he/him)**

Happy Pride!