

Proposed Article

The essay will engage photographs from McCoy's archive to think about quotidian images of Black queer life as a reflection on the ways Black queer people make meaning in the world on their own terms. It interrogates the public spectacle often demanded of Black queer people, forced to make themselves available to be consumed and exploited. The piece draws on writings by Kevin Quashie, Elizabeth Alexander and Tina Campt, among others, to think through the relationship between Black subjectivity, quiet and mundanity. Along with the essay, I would like to publish an interview with McCoy focused on his photography practice, memories of Black queer life in Chicago from the 1970's to 1990's, the impact of HIV/AIDS on Black visual culture and his perspectives on aspects of Black queer artists in the contemporary moment. If possible, I'd like to pair this interview with a recording of a group conversation between McCoy and several other Black queer elders. When conducting oral history interviews, I have found that different information comes up when folks are in conversation rather than in a one-on-one interview. The intimate nature of the relationship creates a dialogue that sparks memories and brings up responses that would otherwise not be addressed. The transcript will also be made available along with the audio recording.

Gervais Marsh

Biography

I am a writer, scholar and curator raised in Jamaica, whose work is rooted in Black Feminism and deeply invested in Black life, concepts of relationality and care. My research specializes in Black diasporic visual culture, focusing on the generative possibilities of difficult racial and sexual intimacies in the work of queer visual and performance artists. This has involved conducting numerous oral history interviews and extensive archival analysis. I have also had the honor of working with and learning from a range of artists. In both my dissertation and public scholarship, I have written about photographers who document Black queer life, including Zanele Muholi and Ajamu X, with pieces published in *Hyperallergic*, *C Magazine*, *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* (forthcoming), and *Musée Magazine*, among others.

As curatorial fellow with the Hyde Park Art Center, I curated exhibitions by artists Heather Brammeier A.J. McClenon. Currently, I am digitizing artist Robert Paige's archive, recording oral history interviews and conducting research in preparation for curating his exhibition opening in Spring 2024. I am also curating a group exhibition of Jamaican artists as the curatorial fellow with the Jamaica Art Society (Spring 2023). I have worked as the curatorial researcher with the South Side Community Art Center in Chicago for the recent exhibition *EMERGENCE*, which focused on Black queer artists in Chicago throughout the 20th century. I have also curated a virtual film series and artist conversation focused on independent Black British cinema with the Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University.