

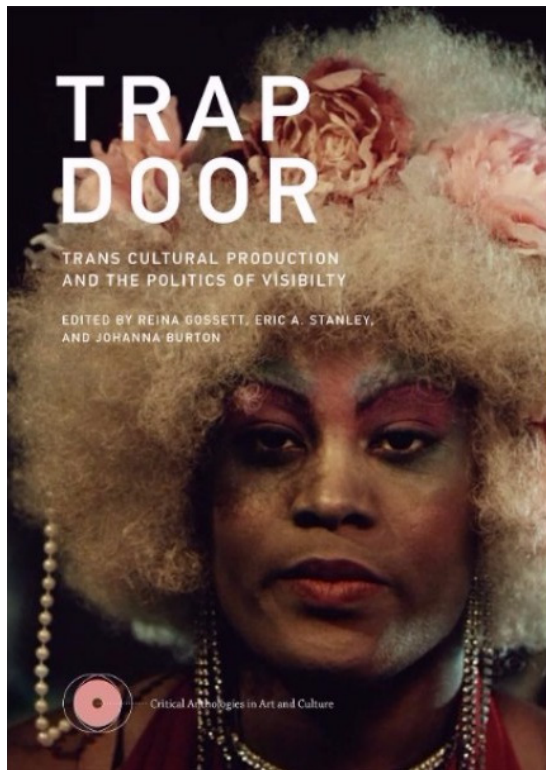
NEW
235 BOWERY
NEW YORK NY
10002 USA
MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 20, 2017

TEL +1 212.219.1222
FAX +1 212.431.5326
newmuseum.org

PRESS CONTACTS:
Paul Jackson, Communications Director
Nora Landes, Press Associate
press@newmuseum.org
212.219.1222 x209
Andrea Schwan
info@andreaschwan.com
917.371.5023

This Fall, New Museum to Publish
Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility,
the Latest Installment in the Critical Anthologies in Art
and Culture Series



Cover of *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by Reina Gossett, Eric A. Stanley, and Johanna Burton

New York, NY...This fall, the New Museum will publish *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by Reina Gossett, Eric A. Stanley, and Johanna Burton. *Trap Door*, to be released November 2017, is the third installment in the New Museum's Critical Anthologies in Art and Culture series, following the publication of *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the Twenty-First Century* (2015), edited by Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter, and *Public Servants: Art and the Crisis of the Common Good* (2016), edited by Johanna Burton, Shannon Jackson, and Dominic Willson.

The increasing representation of trans identity throughout art and popular culture in recent years has been nothing if not paradoxical. Trans visibility is continually touted as a sign of liberalist transformation, but it has coincided precisely with a political moment marked both by heightened violence against trans people (especially trans women of color) and by the suppression of trans rights under civil law. *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility* grapples with these contradictions. It both considers how mainstream representation and co-optation inevitably alter trans identities and confronts the radical incongruity of society's simultaneous acceptance and forceful rejection of those same identities.

The essays, conversations, and dossiers gathered in *Trap Door* delve into themes as wide-ranging yet interconnected as beauty, performativity, activism, and police brutality. Collectively, they attest to how trans people are frequently offered “doors”—entrances to visibility and recognition—that are actually “traps,” accommodating trans bodies and communities only insofar as they cooperate

with hegemonic norms. In turn, the volume speculates about a third term, perhaps uniquely suited for our time: the trapdoor, that clever contraption that is neither entrance nor exit, but instead a secret passageway leading elsewhere. Building on the legacy of art historical and related dialogues around difference, *Trap Door* thus ignites a conversation that extends through and beyond trans culture, insisting that while these debates and dialogues are specific, they nevertheless have great relevance for anyone invested in the ethics of visual culture.

“In conjunction with the fall exhibition ‘Trigger: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon,’ *Trap Door* continues a deep exploration of gender across the New Museum’s fall 2017 programming, with this extraordinary collection of essays and authors probing the topic of trans identity in contemporary culture,” said Lisa Phillips, *Toby Devan Lewis Director* of the New Museum.

List of Contributors:

Lexi Adsit, Sara Ahmed, Nicole Archer, Kai Lumumba Barrow, Johanna Burton, micha cárdenas, Mel Y. Chen, Yve Laris Cohen, Grace Dunham, Treva Ellison, Sydney Freeland, Che Gossett, Reina Gossett, Stamatina Gregory, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, Robert Hamblin, Eva Hayward, Juliana Huxtable, Abram J. Lewis, Heather Love, Park McArthur, CeCe McDonald, Toshio Meronek, Fred Moten, Tavia Nyong’o, Morgan M. Page, Roy Pérez, Dean Spade, Eric A. Stanley, Jeannine Tang, Wu Tsang, Jeanne Vaccaro, Chris E. Vargas, Geo Wyeth, Kalaniopua Young, Constantina Zavitsanos

About the Editors:

Reina Gossett is an activist, writer, and filmmaker. Along with Sasha Wortzel, Gossett wrote, directed, and produced *Happy Birthday, Marsha!* (2017), a short film about legendary trans activist Marsha P. Johnson, starring Independent Spirit Award–winner Mya Taylor with cinematography by Sundance Award–winner Arthur Jafa. As the 2014–17 Activist Fellow at Barnard College’s Center for Research on Women, Gossett produced and directed *No One Is Disposable*, a series of cross-media-platform teaching tools used to spotlight the ways oppressed people are fighting back, surviving, and building strong communities in the face of enormous violence. She is currently working on the short animated film *The Personal Things*, about iconic black trans activist Miss Major. Gossett has recently presented work at Tramway in Glasgow, Scotland (2014), and the New Museum (2012), the Brooklyn Museum (2014), Cooper Union (2015), and Bard College (2016) in New York. Her work has been supported by Open Society Foundation, Art Matters Foundation, Astraea Foundation’s Global Arts Fund, and the Trans Justice Funding Project. Gossett is a participant in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace program, and she was a 2012–13 Fellow in filmmaker Ira Sachs’s Queer/Art/Mentorship.

Eric A. Stanley is an assistant professor in the Department of Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of California, Riverside. They are an editor of *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex* (AK Press, 2011 and 2015), and, along with Chris E. Vargas, a director of the films *Homotopia* (2006) and *Criminal Queers* (2016).

Johanna Burton is Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement at the New Museum in New York and the series editor for Critical Anthologies in Art and Culture. An art historian, critic, and curator, she has contributed articles and reviews to numerous journals—including *Artforum*, *Art Journal*, *October*, and *Texte zur Kunst*—as well as to exhibition catalogues for institutions throughout the world. Burton has curated or cocurated

exhibitions including “Sherrie Levine: Mayhem” at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, in 2011 (with Elisabeth Sussman); “Anti-Establishment” at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, in 2012; “Take It or Leave It: Institution, Image, Ideology” at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, in 2014 (with Anne Ellegood); and, at the New Museum, “XFR STN” in 2013, “Wynne Greenwood: ‘Kelly’” in 2015 (with Stephanie Snyder), “Cheryl Donegan: Scenes + Commercials” in 2016, and “Simone Leigh: The Waiting Room” in 2016 (with Shaun Leonardo and Emily Mello), among other projects. She is the editor of *Cindy Sherman* (October Files, MIT Press, 2006) and coeditor (with Shannon Jackson and Dominic Willson) of *Public Servants: Art and the Crisis of the Common Good* (New Museum and MIT Press, 2016). Prior to her work at the New Museum, Burton was Director of the Graduate Program at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College (2010–13) and Associate Director and senior faculty member at the Whitney Independent Study Program (2008–10).

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

ABOUT CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY SERIES

The Critical Anthologies in Art and Culture series revives the seminal collection of volumes on key cultural topics initiated in 1984 by the New Museum and the MIT Press, which produced six defining volumes on the field of contemporary art, including *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (1984), *Blasted Allegories: An Anthology of Writings by Contemporary Artists* (1989), and *Discourses: Conversations in Postmodern Art and Culture* (1990). The new series, overseen by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement at the New Museum, builds on this historic partnership to provide a platform for today’s most pressing issues in contemporary culture.