

Discussion and Book Presentation – 13 January 2025, 19:00, in English

With
Ian Fleishman
Nicolas Helm-Grovas
Annie Ring

This discussion will explore formal experimentation as an index for evolving expressions of male homosexuality from literary modernism to contemporary cinema. In so doing, it will expose a tradition of flamingly failed passing that is itself a surreptitious mode of passing: the flaunting of gay style as an intentionally unconvincing cover for gay content. While the phenomenon of passing has been surprisingly understudied in queer theory, this book presentation and discussion will expand on foundational conceptualizations of performativity and the closet, suggesting that subjectivity emerges precisely in the margin of error between existing identity models and their imperfect embodiments. Touching on a corpus of queer creatives ranging from Jean Genet to Troye Sivan, this event will intervene in trenchant debates about queer agency and disidentification, wagering that it is precisely in instances of conflict between these auteurs and their inventions that narrative becomes a laboratory for testing the sovereignty and self-determination of queer identity.



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Ian Fleishman is the inaugural Chair of the Department of Cinema & Media Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where he serves on the Executive Board of the Program in Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies. He also holds a secondary appointment as Associate Professor of Francophone, Italian & Germanic Studies and affiliations with the Program in Comparative Literature & Theory and the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities. He has published widely on subjects spanning from the Baroque to contemporary auteur cinema and on a diversity of media ranging from propaganda to video pornography. His first monograph, *An Aesthetics of Injury: The Narrative Wound from Baudelaire to Tarantino* (Northwestern University Press, 2017) was awarded the Northeast Modern Language Association's annual book prize. More recently, with Iggy Cortez, he coedited a volume on *Performative Opacity in the Work of Isabelle Huppert* (Edinburgh, 2023). His second monograph, *Flamboyant Fictions: The Failed Art of Passing*, has appeared in December 2024 (Northwestern University Press).

Nicolas Helm-Grovas is a Postdoctoral Fellow at ICI Berlin. Previously he was Lecturer in Film Studies at King's College London. His book *Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen: Towards Counter-cinema* is forthcoming in the Historical Materialism book series published by Brill and Haymarket. His writing has appeared in publications such as *Oxford Art Journal*, *Radical Philosophy*, *Trafic: Almanach de Cinéma*, *New Left Review: Sidecar*, and in various edited collections. With Oliver Fuke he has organized several exhibitions related to Mulvey and Wollen's work, most recently *Intersections in Theory, Film and Art* at Camera Austria in Graz in 2022. With Kodwo Eshun and Oliver Fuke he is currently editing a three-volume collection of writings by Peter Wollen.

Annie Ring is Associate Professor of German and Film at University College London. She previously worked at Emmanuel College, Cambridge as Research Fellow in 2012–15 and Director of Studies in German in 2013–14. She is the author of the monographs *After the Stasi* (Bloomsbury, 2015), and *The Lives of Others* (BFI Film Classics, 2022) and co-editor of *Architecture and Control* (Brill, 2018), *Uncertain Archives* (The MIT Press, 2021) and *Citational Media* (Legenda Visual Culture, 2024). She has published widely on literature and film, and cultural theories of the 'digital', surveillance, subjectivity and technology in journals including *Surveillance & Society*, *Seminar*, *German Life and Letters*, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, *Oxford German Studies* and *Paragraph*, as well as in edited volumes published in the US, UK, Denmark, and Germany. She sits on the steering group of the German Screen Studies Network and the editorial board of *Paragraph: A Journal of Modern Critical Theory*.

Flamboyant: Towards a Theory of Failed Passing