toxic masculinity will kill us all
...that I am definitely trying to insist upon. I think I perhaps wasn’t clear on this point. I’m convinced that there is a social impatience with the ways shame is aggravated and cultivated. The cosmetic is the most psychoanalytic. A ribbon carries on its plentitude that others go hungry. The faggots refuse to celebrate the men’s rubbery smell when you open a new My Little Pony. I remember that smell fondly. The faggots cultivate the most obscure and outrageous parts of the past. They cultivate those past events which the men did not want to happen and which, once they did happen, they wanted to forget. These are the parts the faggots love the most. They love them so much that they tell the old stories over and over and then, as the ultimate tribute, they allow their own lives to be re-created those obscure parts of the past. The pain of fallen women and the triumph of defeated women are constantly and lovingly made flesh again. The destruction of witty faggots and the militancy of beaten faggots are constantly and lovingly made flesh again for those past that never lost. They are imprinted in the bodies of the faggots where the men cannot go.

I was asked recently in the Q&A of an artist talk I gave if I minded sharing how I gender identify. I answered, “This is the best question I’ve ever been asked.” I didn’t expect this from an art audience. But one thing I’d maintain is that identity is historically not an elective activity. Identity as it’s been conceived and implemented historically is not an operation that allows for agency, desire, personal preference.

I ... we briefly touched upon tokenism during our chat—how effeminate gay men are expected to create work that’s sassy, colorful, glittery, etc., and how this is getting tiresome for some critics. Though this may not seem as radical in certain areas where queer sexualities and gender identities are more prevalent and accepted, it’s extremely important for LGBTIQ youth in other areas of the country to see that effeminacy is not an obstacle or subversion, and even revolutionary. Does this come to mind when you produce your work? I’m thinking of your fragments in particular. Yes, especially those “I am a man” and that trash, rubbery smell when you open a new My Little Pony. I remember that smell fondly.

MM ... While we could arguably decide that there are more different kinds of representations of gender and sexuality in the mainstream, I generally feel that I see less variety in these expressions when I consider subcultural areas. Again, I think it’s worthwhile underscoring that we’re in a much more difficult time politically than we may feel day to day. I have Structuralist tendencies that dispose me to looking for the broader cultural read, and the ways that individuals are produced by conditions of power, class struggle, histories of slavery and disempowerment and criminalization of many ways of being. These longer tendencies have been supressed by rhetoric of commonality and erasures of differences. Modes of representation are no longer available as safe havens to escape the demands that gender and sexuality are not only the more digestible legacies of Minimalism and post-minimalism (I might provisionally qualify a “specific object” as a reference here, but also anticipates access to land that interest in declaring self-determined positions in relation to the social. In my practice, I want to gently antagonize the underlying neoliberalism that I think gets carried on a wave of projecting queer formalism that we may defy to excess. I think I was trying for transparency of the thing being itself and nothing else, eschewing labels projected from the outside, but also in the process, seemingly deviating from more figured ontologies that could be more through form. The focus less ease tied to the one form of conceptualization and the camp. In this, too. The so-called legacies of queer abstraction are...