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# Walking after Midnight

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## Résumé

Men looking for sex with other men in Paris and in my "dirty" mind. Is the "remembrance of things queer" the ultimate strategy to fight the cleansing of queer cityscapes and the corporate digitalization of queer bodies? Can looking back at our recent history help us question our agenda and expand our focus outside our own North Atlantic Academic privileges?

This performance--collage uses parataxis of photography and found text, video, memoir, dance, and drag in an attempt to queer the classroom and the patriarchal tradition of academic inquiry and "lecturing". The encounter will trace at times the personal story of a middle--aged queen, and at times a geographical history of urban gay cruising since 1900, with a special focus on the city of Paris as a physical landscape and as a gendered mindscape.

In this sui--generis kaleidoscopic history, queer bodies will enjoy the pleasure and take the risks associated with intersecting with each other in public restrooms, discos, masquerade balls, parks, embankments and movie theaters. A 1990's public restroom in Atlanta will collide with a 2010's classroom in an elite art--school in Chicago; a 1980's movie--theater in Madrid with centuries of cruising at the Tuileries of Paris; Proust with Craigslist Personals; Barthes with Grindr; and Breton will finally face some home--truths. Picking up the crumbs of visual and textual representation we will recover and repurpose underground artwork (bathroom graffities, and censored erotica) as well as some "high--art" from the Louvre and the d'Orsay. Censorship (past and present) against those representations will parallel (also past and present) attempts to erase the queer body and to cleanse our narratives. Lipstick will be applied. Lip--synching as another form of queer embodiment will take place.

While traveling from the specificity of a personal experience to communal narratives, the encounter also brings up questions about the class and racial tectonic faults that separate the ivory bubble of North Atlantic Academia from the hazards that most men who engage in sex with other men still experience on a daily basis around the world.

About Emilio Williams

Emilio Williams is a bilingual (Spanish/English) award--winning writer and educator. His critically--acclaimed plays have been produced in Argentina, Estonia, France, Mexico, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington DC. As an international communications expert and journalist, he has worked for CNN, the Johns Hopkins University and the University of Chicago. He has been a visiting artist at the University of Portland, Georgia State University, Mary Washington

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University and the University of Wisconsin--Madison. He holds an MFA in Writing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he is currently an Instructor teaching creative writing. His work looks at the literary canon and traditional narratives from a queer and subversive perspective. As a non-fiction writer, he is particularly interested in correcting past histories trying to claim back erased queer artists and the places they frequented. [www.emiliowilliams.com](http://www.emiliowilliams.com)

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**Mots-Clés:** performance, collage