

Reading Troupe #14 - domestic decadence

An associative group of self isolating makers writing queer-feminist erotica from home during covid 19, it's about re-situating the explicitly queer work of modernist designer Eileen Gray and writing into it from the textures, melancholy, frustration and longings of the present. Filth in times of hygiene.



*an
abominable
little
perversion*



Reading Troupe #14: Domestic Decadence
Furniture erotica & bedroom salon slash
fiction in the time of a global pandemic
lockdown.

"It seems to me to be part of the human that there is something in us that desperately desires to be clean and there is something in us that desperately desires to bathe in filth. And that is an irresolvable dilemma. There is no way to think yourself out from that dilemma. One way that culture has tried to resolve the dilemma is to valorise one of those desires, the desire to be clean, and then to insist that the other desire be brutally repressed. And whole systems of thought and feeling and legislation have been predicated on that idea of repressing.

Well it is clear to me that repression is always a recipe for disaster.

When we become overly attached to our own sense of cleanness, moral purity, righteousness, it's the most dangerous thing in the world". Garth Greenwell,
Between the Covers Podcast, February, 2020

Dear Reading Troupe participant

This is your workshop by post. For you and in cross connection with several other people.

I have a feeling that it's better to start with something tactile...even pieces of paper with images and text...and also to know that they were prepared and delivered by a sequence of bodies. Maybe you sit down and take a moment to open your post, that isn't a bill or an advertisement, and enjoy it. And it's always good to do something that doesn't involve looking at a screen, to touch something that isn't a keyboard, or a phone.

I was initially skeptical about attempting a workshop from such distance...there is potential but also no real way to bridge the lack of embodied togetherness.

I've been giving workshops for a long time, but have never undertaken one remotely, it's an experiment, and if it fails then may it fail spectacularly...a dirty mess...I will take all the

blame with pleasure.

Proposing a workshop that entails the writing of queer-feminist erotica stems from my own desire to write from filthy places. I like the focus on furniture, it allows the imagination to move in unexpected directions with some freedom. The projection of desires onto inanimate, if historically loaded, domestic objects.

The history of furniture has always been tied up with the manipulation of social relations so it's wide open to erotic interpretation.

I tend to work well with a set of limitations and many exercises operate between set boundaries, but boundaries are also there to be breached so feel completely free to take liberty with anything proposed.

I don't consider myself a writer, although I write plenty and engage in editing and publishing projects. I'm more an artist using writing and publishing as material...it makes text and publication making open and malleable.

So I hope that we can write, from our domestic isolation during these vey strange days, with pleasure and chaotic experimentation.

The workshop will begin with a couple of led exercises that you will do in your own time/space and which will then be shared in a group folder I'll then propose ways of continuing with the visual materials into writing. We may have a meeting in the middle of the process and will definitely have a salon at the end to read with each other.

There is also the possibility of publishing a zine with the outcomes, if we decide to.

With long distance love

May 2020



J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B.

Taut casing keeps chair's softness contained. Queer folds in black leather pinch puckering seams. She swells hard; cheek leather touching chair to be transformed. Chair is not the accidental consequence of taste. Chair is an abominable little perversion. Thick iron cast curves close to the floor, propping her femurs in bone bowl hip sockets. Butch decadence and soft mummy places are designing chair. Same sex love of fantastic environments, rich whiffs of luxe decorate everything in the explorations of desires. Chair knows mummy likes to wipe away the smears of moral panic. Strength according to 'pure' virility is deep seated. Chair's upholstery is a parchment of bumps and soft leather obstacles offering sensual luxury.

J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B.



M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L.

Beside Porcelain Throne, whom you love alongside me, I assure myself of a devotion that is particular, the way you sit down deep into me so that I mould to your arse cheeks and peak in-between those twin fleshy mounds, I, all plump nubuck leather and chrome, am yours.

I have placed the armchair in the bathroom, beside that less comfortable seat, the toilet, so that I can look at myself in the mirror for longer stints, examining the minute changes in my skin which has never been good enough, never smooth enough, so unlike the constancy of soft leather.

You've left us again, and I'm hit by a pang of jealousy, thinking of how much you give of yourself to Porcelain Throne, she takes it all so greedily, when will I have you in the same way?

I feel safely held by these sausage arms, legs over the edge of the bath, mirror to my left so that I do not look directly into it, I've brought in a novel to read whilst the bath fills up, 'the mirror crack'd from side to side, "The curse is come upon me," cried The Lady of Shalott.'

When the droplets of water bead all over my leather and a warm wet patch begins to gather at my seat, I forget my anxieties about rusting beneath my chrome plating, your breath gathers pace and our skins blend, melted together by friction.

I am nearing the end, Miss Marple has solved the case, the killer has seen the reflection of someone who had wronged her in the living room mirror and struck with a poisoned drink, 'He said, "She has a lovely face, God in his mercy lend her

grace," I need a hot, older lover to sleuth out my shame, Miss Marple, come sit beside me.'

Porcelain Throne always watches in silence, in her bowl she holds eros, that unknown part of her, you and me, I notice you pause, warm wetness floods onto my seat and generously rushes down my legs pooling at my bowed feet.

I grab the toilet roll, unspooling it over the floor then the armchair to soak all this unexpected fluid, I do not know if it is cum or piss, sniff, probably urine, and grab the bottle of bleach, just a little, to wipe down this whole scene.

M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L. M.D.L.

.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H.

orgiastic perverts

she the welcome guest decorator flirts with
bodies and walls

(enter slowly)

She tip-toes gracefully, so as to not spoil
the illusion of the moment.

An intangible energy that hangs low above
the heads of the many onlookers.

That which can only been seen from the
stage, an ever-present witness to the
masquerade.

This is a sequence she has stepped through
many a time, and yet She maintains a
freshness and a vigour that captures the
minds of the orgiastic perverts now seated,
in row upon row, now waiting in eager
anticipation for their share of the show.

At once, all eyes on me. She is the
performer, yet I am the star. An object
sculpted to conceal and to separate, to
ensor, to leave to the erotic imaginary.
Yet this is the peep show.

She, the welcome decorator flirts with
bodies and walls.

She, the cajoler, the tantaliser. I, the
setting, the scene, all at once.

The architecture of the room is soft,
delicate. In tandem with the relentless
performance.

a large trinket box, from which She
reveals the tools of her craft.

the dancer, the director, the revealer, the
ringleader.

faceless crowds, shifting forms in the

smoke and the shadow
now emerging from the distant wings,

In the darkness, the imagined grows tall,
takes shape, closes in.

Once elegant forms, now reduced to brittle
and solemn gestures.

At the pinnacle, She pauses. Her body
removed of poise.

The room now empty. I, the only
witness.

The salon as a personal theatre.

I, the audience.

J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H. J.H.



W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z.

Among orchids, rare wood and lacquer,
you smear it with your greasy fingertips.

What is “cleanness” after all?
What is the pleasure of making things
painted in dull matte vanilla colour?

Isn't pleasure also existing in
transforming?

From a piece of plain rare wood, cut open,
polished, painted in colour, reshaped,
reconstructed and reborn, sensuality,
luxury or mysticism, rush in.

W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z.

J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B.

I suck hard on my perversions.
My hot tongue softens as I drop into my
body. Stroking black leather padded tubes
with the back of my palm; the luxe fabric
implies voluptuousness and costliness.
Touch drifts towards pleasurable and
unproductive dispersals of time. I nestle
into the seat cradling my intimate needs.
Lying long on Gray's Transat armchair's
rare curves. Stroke my belly with a firm
hand. I sing incantations of lust in a
paradise of decadence.

J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B.



R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B.

Purity bordering faintly perverse
impulse

Of the power of his

purely intellectual

Sexual disgust,

The man suffered

~

I feel the rough carpet on every point of my being that touches the ground, and it counterbalances the slippery feel of my tongue in my mouth and my dick in my pants. If I stayed here long enough, the pressure points of my body against this beige cord rug would make indents and I would feel myself weighing into these small depressions that could be seen long after I was heaved out the way.

As it is, the longer I stay appraising myself in the mirror - the deep curve of my torso; the sharp angles of my limbs; my leathery skin pulled taut over each plush roll - the longer the closet is blocked off and clothes pile up in the background.

I want -

I like -

I should and I shouldn't like --

-- to want myself,

to fuck myself,

to fuck chairs like me,

to have two fuckers fuck enmeshed on me,

sweat sticking skin to leather, chair legs

hopping out of indentations made over

stagnant years.

I know as a chair I shouldn't be able

to feel -

to imagine -

to find pleasure in -

to understand -

the presence of a slippery dick in my pants

-

But I'm a sexy chair, and nude but for my cowboy hat, I feel that I can tap into innate truths about myself which --

-- make me flush,

make me grow,

make me know,

make me show my perverted, revolting stuffing.

Please push me away from the mirror now, I can't look any more.

I hope I haven't made any indentations yet.

R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B.



R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D.

Due to my life of lounging
my desires found strength

to be curled up in your hand
a-waiting to be used

I am your tool, your writing tool

to be used- these are new thoughts of mine

as I am
or was

a loud, self-proclaimed top

R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D.

KGAMMION

A GAME FOR 2 PLAYERS



Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. .M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M.

“A sensual domestic utopia is perfected by the spasm of sexual ambiguity”

I thought by myself when I first entered their living room. The heat of the summer day had warmed the dark purple walls, as I felt little sweat pearls twirling down my naked shoulders to leave a vaporised mark in a space I had never imagined to be invited in.

They had disappeared behind a textured glass door that I wasn't confident enough to follow. I could see their silhouettes moving but could only imagine what was happening behind that door. Clothes that got changed and new personas performed to seduce and tempt the stranger in the living room, maybe?

Like a stranger, that I was, I waited in their living room to try to understand through their choices of objects who this beautiful creature is. The room is empty besides of a handful of pieces of furniture.

A pink chair grabbed my attention. A blanket has been thrown carelessly on the side giving off a nutty wood smell. They must have taken it to the bonfire last night and a ping of jealousy stings my ego for having missed that.

An enormous picture of a white bird rests against the wall. It's the only decoration in the room and more than anything it echoes a sense of magical surrealism. Any minute now the bonny bird would fly off and transform...

Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M. .M. Z.M. Z.M. Z.M.

L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B.

In the scented atmosphere, a whiff of perversity quietly lingers from the evening before. A sort of heroic awakening on the hard wood floor. A mechanism to satisfy an inner urge, and the realisation of a forbidden and unsettling feeling slowly flowed into consciousness, as she ruminates over the events that had followed. The deep purple walls, the layers of rich shawls on the chair, their clothes scattered across the floor. Even they had become mixed together to the point of confusion.

From the outside she was sure it would have looked abnormal. The unexpected romanticism became recognisable movements through such performative acts. Had she unwittingly developed a taste for such perverse pleasures. Highly sexualised, her desires found strength, she could still smell the rare wood and lacquer.

L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B.







R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D.

it is raining again in my place

sounds of birds surround me

I feel I have not grown in a while.

touch

But I am right here, awaiting their

me

I am unsure if

my owner

knows the enjoyment

I get out of this.

My owner is moaning again

About not having anyone to

weight

to spend their days on me, on top of

It is a normal day, of being sat on.

R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D. R.D.



R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B.

The almost hysterical rush in
gender-loaded exhaustion
Is the thinking that constructs
heroic reawakening
And nervous disorders
In need of medical treatment
promised to cure

~

The chair had never seen so many leaves
before. Freed from its habitual context, it
was overwhelmed with greenery. It had
spent nearly all its days with one rubber
plant, artfully placed in a giant terracotta
pot that complemented its orange hue - or
so that was the intention, it believed.

Those vain concerns felt far behind it now,
as it had moved through an upscale
vintage market, then a flea market, and
finally been brought up as part of a pack-
age of furniture delivered to ailing,
underfunded NHS departments. In an
ironic twist, the chair had been delivered
to the psychological assessment corridor
of a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC). As it
was hauled through the corridors by burly
furniture removal men, the chair thought
wistfully of the sweaty gay palms of its
creator, gripping the top edge of its padded
body as her furniture was labelled deviant,
strange and disruptive.

The chair had been in its current position
for around six months now, and supported
hundreds of people coming in for assess-
ment. The chair felt their bodies heavy
in the centre of its structure, weary from
years on a waiting list and incredibly
rigid and alert to telling the right narrative
which would unlock the doctor's
prescribing powers. Sometimes they

gripped the chair's arm rests, and the chair
could feel their rapid heartbeat reverberat-
ing all across its metal frame. Sometimes
in the summer, the sweat on their skin
stuck their legs to the chair's leather,
causing a loud, surely painful, ripping
sound when they finally got to the end
of the arduous list of questions and were
invited to leave the room to await further
instruction. One thing they never did,
though, was lean all the way back in the
chair.

The chair was aware it was not fit for
purpose. No-one wanted to recline in that
climactic and crucial appointment. Since
being in that position, the chair had not felt
the back of one single person.

The chair wondered why it had been
placed there. It often assumed it followed
a humorous reference to Freudian therapy.
In quieter moments, though, it wondered if
it was a reference to its designer, and her
perverted disruption to the order of things.
It wondered about the people coming
through, subduing their perverted
leanings, deviant desires, and the
confusing, muddled aspects of their
allegiances. It wondered about a
sanitisation being asked of the patients
who sat on it, which its designer refused
to do.

The chair started to think about the
desires of the people who would sit in it,
and with nearly each person who came
into the room, the chair imagined what
might happen if the doctor weren't there.
The chair imagined a different kind of
sweat. The chair felt them both transported
to another place, to the bedroom of a lover
of the sitter, where them and the lover
would become a sticky mess of skin,
silicone, leather, metal and lube, and

passionate yells would ring through the chair. The chair, day after day, imagined bare sweaty backs pressed against it, like it occasionally felt in its former life. The chair ached for the patients.

This reverent thinking quickly got too deep and stressful, and like every day, the chair had to take a break in the parking lot of the GIC, amongst more greenery than it had ever seen previously, recalibrating, readjusting, and getting ready for another day in the hospital.

R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B. R.A.B.



W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z.

The more critical a people become,
the more the figure of the erotic seems to
disappear.

But only when I am tied up to the Transat
chair.

I feel this is the true safe place that I could
let loose,

when you tie me on to that chair,

force my legs open,

my arms attached to the chair,

feeling the chill from the leather and steel
surfaces,

eventually reaching to the same

temperature of my skin.

I am blindfolded and gagged;

the chair holds me perfectly in place.

The tingling feeling gradually gets louder,

transporting that sensation from the tips of

my fingers to the rest of the body through

my veins,

not knowing what's to come.

Here I surrender, not to you, but to my

melancholic perversity.

Here I don't think about who/what I am,

I can be a dog, a cumkitten, a fuckdoll, an

object.

But only when I am tied up to the Transat

chair.

W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z.

J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B.

Her domestic interiors thrill me.

Sliding belly to floor; sticky mottled skin
is making imprints. The air smells of dust

on hot metal. The Bibendum armchair

feels bizarre. The hide has a personal style

and is claiming to liberate presumptions of

the 'masculine'. Solid on all fours the

Gray Transat chair looms against snooker

green side-lines. Thick rods to support the

weight of a body. The space fills with hard

studded occupants lit by an acrid yellow

orb. This false sun illuminates curious

textures of domination.

J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B. J.B.



L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B.

This kind of evening should ideally take place in a modernist sexual space, like this one, alongside numerous comfortable sofas for lounging, draped by lush and over grown plants. The walls adorned with book cases laden with academic feminist and erotic poems and texts, not the kind you could find easily within general circulation. It is essential that the space is private, sensual, scented and delicately lit. I wait for the events of the evening to unfold, the highlight I yearn for in my day-to-day solitude.

The monthly ceremony marked with the kind of mysticism that could only be brought on by the healing powers of the lesbians who inhabit this space, and their select invited friends and the occasional new acquaintances.

Their regenerative powers and the appeal of the reading of banned poems in the scented atmosphere of their unusual modernest home, had created rumours that stirred even the most dutiful and domestic women. The evening begins with the serving of numerous potent liqueurs and a selection of exotic fruits designed to whet the appetite and absorb any anxieties.

This gives way to the initial name giving and play both liberating and faintly perverse. Created to purge the daily grind of restraint, central to restoring the strength of individual taste of their own true nature. Together they seem to liberate each other, uninhibited, wrapped, sung and highly sexualised. The whole evening characterised by a lingering whiff of perversity.

L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B. L.B.

W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z.

From the outside, it would have looked, “abnormal”, her spirit connection highly sexualised for her lounging strange perverts her desires found strength.

But when she opened my door and looked at herself in the mirror, she seemed to be more confident of showing what she’s been hiding outside, she would undress herself in front of me, look at me but at the same time look at herself in the reflection, if that could be considered my vision. I don’t know if she was seeing the sadness in her eyes that I was seeing.

I liked when she lay her fingers on my skins, opened the drawers, one, by one, sliding in, and out, she would caress the edges of every corner before she closed the door again.

She brought in someone I’ve never seen before, she pushed them on to my body, I shivered, that was the first time I felt a warmth which was not hers. The metal bits in the drawers got squeaky and rusty, I heard them giggling, then she pressed her body on me too, I shivered even more, their warmth lingered.

W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z. W.Z.



in her interior design, she was making a claim for

erotic and hygienic Loos

large-scale wrought-iron monuments "wrapped and sung in the curl of her own" interior

it would have looked, hypnotic

with the healing powers of "the sins of her youth"

Badovici who was hypercharged so powerful by the time

"The first Loo came into being,

calls her

and finds that she

can not be complete

without This vision



Damia (enter slowly),

She thi welcome guest decorator flirts, With bodies and walls,

orgiastic rooms, at the heart of "forbidden feeling."

Likewise behold the strange modern Loo

There on divans Artistes who daubs the walls with

a coat of

erotic

wash.

such scenes in Paris

Looking back: eleven years earlier.

this first house

appears time and again,

in a dream."²⁸ The close She came to the Loo

among orchids rare wood and lacquer,

sensuality, luxury or mysticism,

rush in

to purge.

most intimate needs that spiral snake-

like through openings like a blue eye with a dilated pupil.

the strength of nervous virility,

poisonous state of degenerate homo desire for utopia.

He striped giving off flashes of gender struggles

disquieting appearances,

erotic

he gripped and guided

force of animals

me

an abominable little perversion.

"the hymn to

pathologically degenerate, sick and sickening people

"frightening" "tendencies."

threatening

bizarre, disquieting, mystical male

same-sex suggest a kind of mysticism

"the almost hysterical rush in gender-loaded exhaustion

In need of medical treatment promised to cure.

sick subjects burgeoning

on degeneration

spasm of an already wrought-iron column the cross,

within

penal object

in out

an imminent amen

orgiastic rooms

purity bordering faintly perverse impulse,

of the power of his "purely intellectual

sexual disgust,

the man suffered

"my degenerated body

"more bizarre than beautiful."

perversity to the light

O. S. O.S. O.S. O. S. O.S. O.S. O. S. O.S. O.S. O. S. O.S. O.S.

in and out

use I

over I

not taste,

in

But

in the

interior

occupy it.

Topp

orgiastic perverts

a sensual Domestic, utopia
is perfected by the spasm of "sexual ambiguity"
human artifice
structure ornament
physical spiritual
outside and inside
biological social
masculine feminine
public private
heterosexual homosexual
connecting
interiority and modern bodies
the most intimate needs and desires

oppositions.

"House-Machine"

a mechanism satisfy an inner urge

the realization of a "forbidden and "unsettling," feeling,"

"machine aesthetic." and sensations destabilize given rules.

a melancholic perversity [and] a non-reproductive, decadent subject.

(enter slowly) an already foreseeable death, and perfected sensual paradise.

'Transat' armchair - queered. the bedroom'

resembles this 'perverse' sexuality



Reading Troupe #14 - domestic decadence workshop and zine were developed within the soft modular frame of the exhibition *Domestic Optimism* by Emma Wolf-Haugh. Dealing with mangled and mistold modernist legacies. The project begins with furniture, inanimate objects that come loaded with social connections and invisible histories. Through the displacement of cultural detritus modernist architectural history is retold in the collective key of queer-feminist and decolonial practices, continually unearthing filth in times of hygiene, and complicating things that were never simple to begin with.

Participants of Reading Troupe #14 worked with images of furniture designed by Eileen Gray and with text excerpts from: **Eileen Gray and the Design of Sapphic Modernity : Staying In'** By Jasmine Rault & **A Queer Analysis of Eileen Gray's E.1027** by Katarina Bonnevier.

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