

ME - BIENVENIDES-WELCOME - BIENVENIDES-WELCOME - BIENVENIDES

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR SOME QUEER PERREO IN LONDON THIS IS FOR YOU ;)
INSTAGRAM: @NEOPERRIEMOS.LONDON

Neo perriemos LONDON

DESIGN IN ACTION MAJOR PROJECT / ISABELA ASTORQUIZA GÓMEZ

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

ON MY POSITIONALITY

ON REGGAETÓN AND NEOPERREO

Reggaetón History

Reggaetón from a feminist perspective

What is Neoperreo?

Raving culture in Electronic Music and Neoperreo

THE WORLD OF NEOPERREO

General context and its evolution

Stakeholder map

Exciting opportunities

THE POWER OF DOCUMENTATION

Documenting queer spaces

Queer Manifestos

Practicing the theory with Popola

Index

THE FUTURE RAVE

A trip to the future with NEB

Main reflections about the residency

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

A short reflection

NEOPERRIEMOS LONDON

How might we?

A multichannel guide

NEXT STEPS

THE IMPACT OF THIS PROJECT

CONCLUSION

GLOSSARY

BIBLIOGRAPY

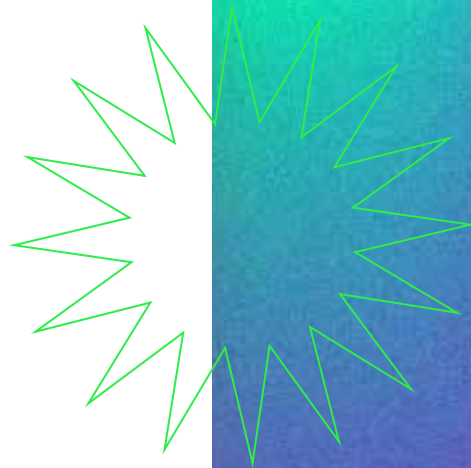
APPENDIX

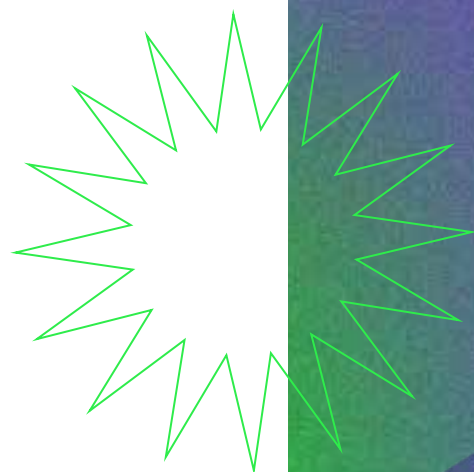
AKNOW LEDGMENTS

This project couldn't have been possible without my friends, family and all the perreo lovers who danced with me along this fun and transforming journey.

Special thank you to all the collectives, artists, tutors and incredible people with whom I collaborated in different stages of Neoperriemos London:

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Museo Q
@corine_studio
@gabrielalaurquiza
@ilustramemoreno
Carlotta Aoun
Anna Schlim





ABSTRACT

This project explores how the search for a queer Latinx community around the Reggaetón genre in London, conveyed from a personal need for self-identity exploration and a sense of belonging to a collective matter where different stakeholders within the Neoperreo scene (DJs, artists, ravers, perreo lovers, queers, baby queers, and Latinx migrants) identified with the main goal of building communities based collaboration, care and perreo.

Through participatory and ethical methods and feminist queer theories, I connected and collaborated with different humans who decided to be part of this initiative, to finally co-create a platform for Latin American "Baby queers" to navigate London and find communities in which they could explore their identity and sexuality through perreo, as well as occupying spaces where respect, love, freedom and consent are the core values.

By doing this project I aim to build not only this platform but a community of Latin American artists, and Neoperreo lovers, where we can generate collaborations and support common interests around migration challenges, political issues, feminism, queerness, social design, art, and music, among many others.

INTRODUCTION

When I started this final major project I was very interested in tackling gender, queer and Latin American topics. Nevertheless, I needed to determine which approach to take in these subjects, so it was crucial to understand the needs and challenges queer Latin American communities could be having in the UK, the context in which I am currently embedded. I also knew beforehand that even though my basis was London, Colombia was the environment where I had a deeper knowledge and I could have access to more networks and resources to develop this project, so I just wanted to keep that in mind during the definition of my approach.

Around the same time when I was thinking about my research question, I listened to a podcast called "Hasta Abajo", in which a Puerto Rican feminist historian was sharing the dichotomy she had because of liking Reggaetón and being a feminist woman.¹ Her words blew my brain in countless pieces because she made me think about my positionality regarding this music genre and my relationship with it throughout my life.

I also connected these thoughts with my current life in the UK, being a Latin American and Colombian migrant, looking for a community and a sense of belonging, but also for safe spaces to explore my identity while having fun and dancing Reggaetón.

All of these needs drove me to think that maybe more people were also asking themselves questions like "Where can I find a queer Latin American community in London? Are there safe and queer spaces to explore my sexuality? Are there queer Reggaetón spaces where I can dance without feeling assaulted?"²

I realized that I had an eco-social opportunity getting cooked, that was involving community, activist, social, queer and Latin American nuances that shaped my first research question:

How could I support or create a queer Latinx community in London around Reggaetón, that seeks

INCLUSION

CARE

LOVE

PLEASURE

FREEDOM?

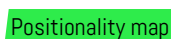
Throughout this document, I will analyze the big picture of how addressing the last question generated a social impact on the communities and people I worked with and how it impacted my practice as a designer.

To do so, I will introspect my positionality, followed by different reflections regarding the theories that informed my primary and secondary research, along with the methods that helped me apply an ethical and participatory design, while narrowing down the scope and ongoing outputs of this project.

¹ Liking Reggaetón and being a feminist woman could be considered as something incoherent, since Reggaetón is a genre that has hyper sexualized women in its songs, lyrics and aesthetic. But also has been a part of an industry that has been dominated by cis sexist men.

² This is how I felt in the mainstream and heterosexual Reggaetón or Latin American clubs when I first arrived in London.

This map is an x-ray of me, mixing the concept of Positionality and the Wheel of Power/Privilege. To do so, I asked myself different questions regarding my age, race, gender, sexual preferences, languages, mental health, and wealth, among others that you will be able to see on the map, to understand how privileged or how much power I was having regarding my topic and communities of research.



Some thoughts...

Being a migrant makes me feel lonely but that's also a privilege since it's a commonality I share with the Latin communities in London, also my identity exploration.

³ I had this feeling of not being "queer enough" when I started occupying white queer spaces. Despite feeling safe and attracted by the interactions that were happening in those places, I was feeling different, in the way I looked, the people I was going with, even the way my body was moving, which made me feel that I was not quite part of that world that I was starting to explore.

ON REGGAETÓN and Neoperreo

REGGAETÓN HISTORY

I would like to start this chapter by confessing that I was somehow afraid of choosing a topic like Reggaetón for my thesis project. I thought that I was not going to find enough theoretical information about it since it is a recent music genre but also because of its local and grounded origins. But then I listened to myself again and I realized that those fears were probably coming from my academic, work and family background in which I grew up and got formed as a designer, so I thought about those uncertainties again under the eco-social lenses and I reaffirmed that exactly because it was an urban, grounded and a very local topic it was completely important for my research.

Indeed Reggaetón is a contemporary subject, but that does not mean that people are not talking about it and analyzing the different entanglements that happen in the genre and its culture; like its historical roots, its sounds and lyrics, but also gender, sex, politics, social justice, migration, among other topics. Now, I would like to start by explaining where it emerged and from which other genres and cultures it was influenced.

As Flores explained in the book "Reggaetón", the origin of this genre is complicated to explain because its style was brewed in a multi-local and transnational location. However, we could agree that its

roots are in Jamaica, Panamá, New York and last but not least Puerto Rico.

Reggaetón is the result of the intersection of "many diaspora, migratory, and circulating communities of taste and generational solidarity" (Harkins, P, 2010, p. X).

SOUNDS

Vico C⁴ explains that Reggaetón was born in a hip-hop environment in late 1990, with a little bit of Jamaican dancehall and Puerto Rico's tropical flavour and rhythm (p.5). Before it was called Reggaetón, artists and people on the streets were referring to it as Spanish reggae. But, again, it is important to clarify that "...reggaeton is neither hip-hop nor dancehall nor Latin nor tropical in the traditional sense, yet it draws from all of these (and forges imagined connections with them) in projecting a distinctive, resonant sound." (pg. 8)⁵

From the beginning until nowadays, Reggaetón lyrics have talked about social aspects like violence in the marginalized neighborhoods of Latin American countries, unemployment issues, corruption, health, education needs, sex, among others. However, the last subject has been the most controversial, and it has been the reason to categorize Reggaetón as vulgar music, since the songs and the video clips refer to women as sexual objects, showing their bodies barely naked, moving in a very provocative way while doing perreo⁶ dancing or doggy style dancing.

⁴ A Puerto Rican hip-hop and Reggaetón pioneer.

⁵ An example of the Reggaetón sound is illustrated in Tego Calderon's song "Pa Que Retozen", available at: <https://open.spotify.com/track/5YJ4BVtFmVCxU->

⁶ Where women move their pelvis and hips making undulations. In the meanwhile their partners stand behind them enjoying their sexual movements.

ON REGGAETÓN and Neoperreo

REGGAETÓN FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Perreo has always been led by women.⁷ We decide when to start or stop dancing with a partner, and perreo movements are a way of revealing against the expectation of being quiet and “decent”, not catching the attention too much when dancing, and even worse suppressing our sexual desires and the right to communicate them.

This is why I want to bring Ivy Queen⁸ into this discussion because since she started her career in the middle nineties she was suggesting through her songs that women were as entitled as men to express their sexual desires without being disrespected. You can see an example of this in her Song “Yo Quiero Bailar”⁹

Ivy Queen was one of the artists with whom I started to explore this idea of feminism in Reggaetón, and despite I was not making this kind of analysis in my adolescence, now that I look back, reggaetón and especially songs like “Yo Quiero Bailar” made me acknowledge my body and the ownership I had over it when dancing for myself and with others. I would say that Ivy prepared the ground for Neoperreo revolution.

► Ivy Queen



PHOTO: COURTESY OF COURTESY OF TELEMUNDO/BILLBOARD LATIN MUSIC AWARDS.

⁷ Something that was rare for Latin genres like salsa, merengue or bachata where men led the dancing.

⁸ A Puerto Rican singer who has been considered one of the pioneers of the Reggaetón genre, one of the first women in the Reggaetón industry and recognized

⁹ “Yo Quiero Bailar.” Available at: <https://open.spotify.com/track/5dg7bnBMVAEtXHKf4UZQlu?si=f598c3372aea4e9e>.

ON REGGAETÓN and Neoperreo

WHAT IS NEOPERREO?

Neoperreo or #neoperreo is a musical phenomenon derived from Reggaeton whose name was mentioned by the artist Tomasa del Real in 2016 in an interview on the Red Bull Music Academy Radio program in New York (Herrera 2016).” (Salvado, M, 2019, p. 47)

Salvado also mentions that Neoperreo challenges traditional sexism in Reggaetón, prioritizing women's pleasure (just as Ivy Queen did in early 2000), and its culture is around gathering in the community just to dance, reclaiming a more inclusive party where the main actors would be women and queer communities (artists but also party-goers). So, we are talking about a subgenre of Reggaetón where misrepresented communities are part of the music-making and in its night scene violent and disrespectful acts are not tolerated.

As Moncayo (2023) analyzes in her thesis project, there are other community values related to Neoperreo like the collaborative dynamics of sharing intangible assets through cyberspace. Therefore, this digital territory is a space where many artists promote and support each other's careers, also counting on community support. An example of this is the Instagram account @neoperreo where different shows and artists are promoted around the world, also allowing collaborations between them.

► Tomasa del Real



PHOTO: COURTESY OF WWW.DEEJAYBOOKING.COM

ON REGGAETÓN and Neoperreo

SOUNDS AND AESTHETIC

10

This is an eclectic subgenre, where you can identify the rhythm of Dembow but also a fusion with other electric sounds, coming from the Witch House, Drag or Haunted House.

Regarding its aesthetic, it is also a mix of futurist and freak elements with the hypersexualized Reggaetón style, which makes it more underground.

I have also perceived that the nature of this subgenre is experimental and organic, so I wouldn't get too strict about the specific sounds or aesthetics Neoperreo has. It could have sinister touches, but also Caribbean, Brazilian or African. What is beautiful about this genre is that it is a platform for all of those who haven't felt represented in Reggaetón and its night scene.

▶ 2C PERREA



PHOTO: PICTURE TAKEN BY ME DURING THE PARTICIPATORY PARTY OBSERVATION

¹⁰ Dembow is a music genre from Dominican Republic. Its rhythm was the basis for Reggaetón, but Dembow rhythm is more constant and its beats are faster. An example of this genre is Shabba Ranks' song "Dem Bom". Available at: <https://open.spotify.com/track/1t44riL8MOVxt0fb40y8ob?si=ae17a1be525646a0>

¹¹ Witch House is a genre also known as Drag or Haunted House. It is an experimental microgenre within Electronic Music. Its sounds are based on high-pitched keyboard effects and its aesthetic is inspired in occultism, witchery and gothic themes. An example of this genre is the song "Magic Spells" by Crystal Castle. Available at: <https://open.spotify.com/track/4RJh9VcbwKKSTtc2EZdLs?si=c390a4eb226144e8>

¹² To get to know more details about Neoperreo I invite you to visit the Neoperreo guide I created collaboratively during this project. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/neoperriemos.london/>

ON REGGAETÓN and Neoperreo

RAVING CULTURE IN ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND NEOPERREO

During my primary and then secondary research I noticed there were a lot of the raving community values in the Neoperreo scene, and in those values, I see the basis of the interactions and relationships that are so rich within these communities. So, let's talk about what raving is in the eyes of McKenzie Wark, author of "Raving".

"What is a rave like? A jackhammer in a sauna. To rave, to rove, to rêve (dream)." If it's called a rave, there's some expectations: It will go for a long time. That might need a little chemical assistance. There might be some socializing, some flirting, even some rave sex, but we're here to dance- to the point of exhaustion." (Wark, M, 2023, p. 5)

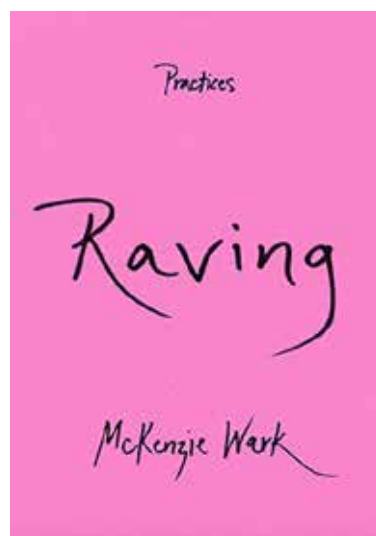
As she takes us raving into different underground locations in New York's trans night scene, she explains how raving is more than partying, instead, it is a platform that enables that feeling of not feeling a freak, not worrying about your body being an anomaly, because most of the ravers are also anomalies that are feeling free because they are not being disrespected, hated or misunderstood.

So raving and raves are those places and moments in which we can find too many

things that we can't in the heteronormative and oppressive system and it is also a way to explore the world. "Raves serve a lot of needs, interests, desires. For distraction, entertainment, exercise, dating, cruising, and so on." (P. 3).

With those other anomalies that McKenzie describes in her book you build relationships based on kinship principles, you take care of each other, you can perform as you like, be a fairy tale character if you fancy, have intimacy and pleasure with others and just don't be apologetic about yourself existing in this world.

Therefore, we could say that the values in these spaces are aligned with the ones that I have been looking for since the beginning of this project, and I started observing the same values¹³ in Neoperreo raves, in which I was finding that sense of kinship.



MACKENZIE WARK'S BOOK "RAVING"
AVAILABLE IN PAPER AND ONLINE

¹³ Inclusion, care, love, pleasure and freedom.

THE WORLD of Neoperreo

NEOPERREO IN LONDON

GENERAL CONTEXT AND ITS EVOLUTION

The Neoperreo scene in London started happening right after COVID. 2C Perrea for example, was one of the collectives that got shaped very organically. It all began with a group of friends from Chile, Colombia, Venezuela and Spain. They wanted to have a party where they could dance to Latin music and perrear with their girlfriends, feeling the joy and spark from their cultures.

So they organized a party in a warehouse in Walthamstow for their friends and some close DJs, without any intention of making money or having a large crowd. But what happened was that approximately two hundred people showed up (they were Latin but also British and European Queer perreo lovers).

▶ “Todas nos contestaron que sí, que felices de pinchar gratis, que estaban buscando también algo como esto en Londres, que felices de participar, y nosotros lo encontramos muy cute, como que tampoco lo esperamos, pero fue muy lindo porque todo el mundo estaba como muy dispuesto a poner su tiempo y su energía en esto.”¹⁴

(Quote extracted from the interview with one of the members from 2C Perrea)

Like 2C Perrea, other collectives and communities like

POPOLA
ΕΡΟΚΑ
SUZIO

started hosting their parties (some more underground and less commercial than others) between 2021 and 2022, wanting to create Latin spaces where perreo, Neoperreo and Electronic music could be danced and enjoyed, with their people and under their rules.

Since the creation of these collectives, parties and communities, they have been generating connections with each other but also with other stakeholders who are part of the scene, like Latin American or multicultural venues in London and other collectives like voguing houses in Colombia (eg: House of Yeguazas), Queer night safeness groups like Safe Only London, and some Queer British festivals and venues.



NEOPERREO COLLECTIVES AND ARTISTS



PICTURES FROM INSTAGRAM

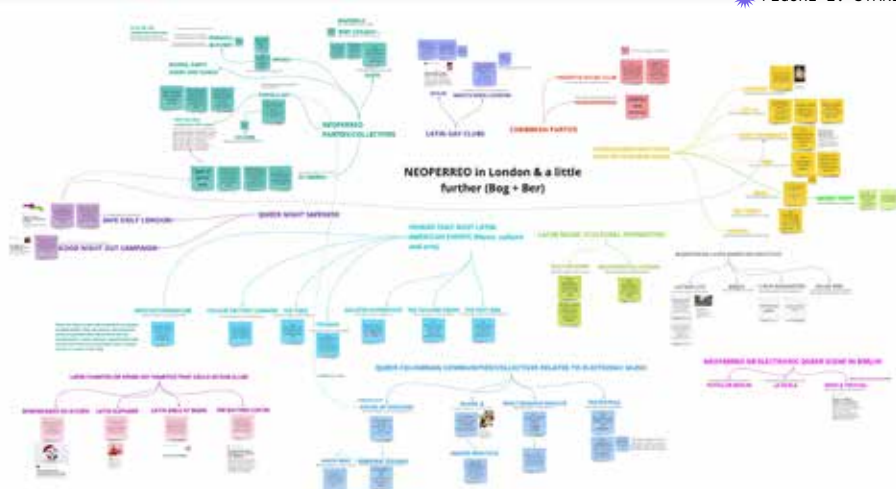
¹⁴ In this part of the interview, she was telling me that when they talked to the DJs about the party they all agreed and were very excited because they were looking for that kind of space in London. This made them realise that people were willing to spend their time and energy on this initiative.

THE WORLD of Neoperreo

NEOPERREO IN LONDON & FURTHER

STAKEHOLDER MAP

FIGURE 2: STAKEHOLDER MAP



Mapping a stakeholder map along the project helped me to understand how the Neoperreo world is developing in London, but also in some other contexts where Neoperreo is connected, like the Neoperreo and Electronic Music scene in Latin America, mainly Colombia, and other places within the UK and Europe.¹⁵

I built the map based on participatory party observation, interviews, conversations and doing secondary research on Instagram, independent magazines and online articles.

WHO IS PART OF THE NEOPERREO SCENE IN LONDON?¹⁶

- ▶ DJs and artists born in Latin America (Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Colombia and Chile)
- ▶ Second generation Latin DJs and artists (Colombia and Ecuador)
- ▶ Other people who are not necessarily artists but are part of the collectives (Chile, Colombia, Venezuela and Spain)
- ▶ Party goers and ravers From different countries of Latin America (first and second generation), Europe (mainly Spain) and China.

OVERALL AGES

- ▶ Between their 20s and 35s or 40s.

¹⁵To explore the findings and reflections regarding each group of stakeholders I invite you to take a look at the visual documentation document where there is a deep analysis of the map.

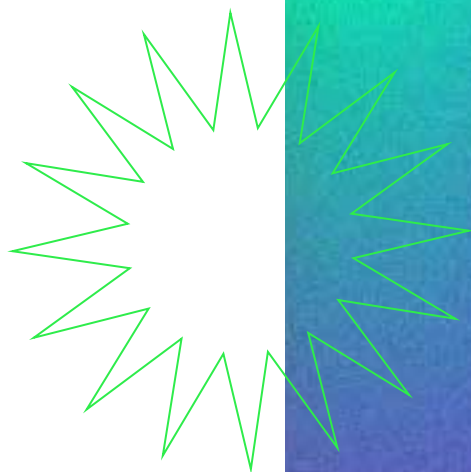
¹⁶This is based on my research and observation, so there could be more people and communities in the scene who are not mapped here yet).

THE WORLD of Neoperreo

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES

Mapping the scene from an outsider's point of view and then having a closer approach to talking to the people, gave me some ideas of how my work and time could generate a positive impact for the community. Some of these opportunities were:

- ▶ Interesting and meaningful collaborations are happening among the different artists and Neoperreo promoters. But there could be an opportunity to build together a platform where we could all talk to each other, joining forces for the different causes, projects or interests we are fighting for.
- ▶ As this is a merging subculture, it could be documented creatively and collaboratively to build memories (based on sound, photographs, cartographies, etc) around this social movement, but also as a way to guide people who want to explore this world and don't know where to start from.
- ▶ Both of the collectives I interviewed (2C Perrea and Popola) were interested in defining what their communities were, in terms of communication. They have evolved very organically but now they would like to generate statements that talk about what they are, beyond the party concept.
- ▶ As most of the people who are involved in the Neoperreo scene are going through or have experienced the transition process of migrating, these communities or social platforms could be a way of navigating situations related to migration, identity search, sexual exploration and finding their kin.



THE POWER of documentation

DOCUMENTING QUEER SPACES

"Queer stories should no longer 'hide behind straight curtains!'" Katarina Bonnevier's (cited in Furman, A.N. and Mardell, J, 2022, page X)

Neoperreo and Queer spaces where this social movement is happening are worthy of being documented. In each party, conversation and space we occupy as migrants and Queer people some statements are being shouted and there is also a lot of creativity when it comes to creating a utopian perreo world with limited resources, where the main objective is to enjoy ourselves, not having to apologize or hide who we are, dancing and building our community with the people we share values with.

It is important to generate this heritage because it is a way of making it up for those who couldn't do it in the past since they were just trying to survive, and also a way of building memories and history for the ones in the future. A beautiful example of this is developed in the book Queer Spaces, where the authors wanted to "enable access to a shared queer heritage, one that has previously been sidelined and ridiculed." (p. X)

In their work Furman and Mardell (2022), also highlight that it is important to document Queer spaces because it is one

of the many ways of uplifting queer lives and histories in architecture and public contexts where these lives have not been recognized, instead they have oppressively being silenced.

They also claim that archiving is a way of doing activism, and doing this mainstream publication in the British Isles means for them that times are changing. This made me think of my work and the opportunities to keep documenting these spaces and supporting them as Museo Q has done through their radical, nomadic and queer museology (p. 198), an organization that I got to collaborate with later on during the project.

Dalston in the 80s, Berlin Nights and especially Queer London were also very important sources of inspiration for this project. The last one is an LGBTQ+ guide of London where Kheraj (2021) attempted to show the resilience queer people have had over history in a city that is continuously changing and that it has also persecuted queer communities through violence and hate.

While showcasing different nightlife places, saunas, shops, charities, health and community spaces and organizations, among other categories, he also shows what these places or platforms are, connected to the people and their stories behind them.

Understanding the power of documentation not only gave me ideas on how to

THE POWER of documentation

create powerful storytelling through photography, tales, maps and sounds, but also affected my process and practice, as I see it now as a way of doing activism, generating impact in different moments in time, giving a voice to the ones who were silenced in the past, provoking conversations and building bridges between the living ones, and finally creating memories as well as forging a new path for those who are to come.

QUEER MANIFESTOS

The Pinkwashed Manifesto, The Spit! Manifestos, A Manifesto for Rural Communities and Our work is everywhere, were manifestos and books that I consulted during my secondary research. Getting to read these documents encouraged me to use the manifesto-building method to define what a community is and what it stands for politically, making very careful use of words and stories within them.

These amazing documents also remind me of the importance of tone, voice and storytelling techniques when writing for different audiences. For instance, "We the Enemy" written in The Spit! Manifesto, showed me the power words hold since the entire manifesto was about repeating different names ¹⁷ queer people were labeled with, emphasizing the threat they represented to a normative society.

The style of the manifesto just mentioned

was very interesting for me because by mentioning that enormous amount of labels the author is not only making it visible on one hand how society has catalogued queer people but it is also a way of revindicating, giving all of those deviants the right to exist in paper and it is also a way of saying in my interpretation:

"Yes! We are here, we exist, we are infinitely diverse, we are together, and despite you see us as the enemy we are now able to shout out loud we are maricas ¹⁸ "

PHOTOS: TAKEN IN QUEER AND ANARCHIST LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES



¹⁷ "Sodomites, perverts, introverts, faggots, deviants, the queers, the keepers of spoiled identities..." Motta (2017)

¹⁸ Maricas or Maricas in plural, has been one of the most popular nicknames used in Latin America to refer in an offensive way to a gay or queer person. Nowadays queer people use it proudly as a way of resistance, taking out the power that the word had by appropriating it. It is also a way of using a Spanish word instead of the word "queer", which could be perceived as a colonialist term that comes from hegemonic cultures.

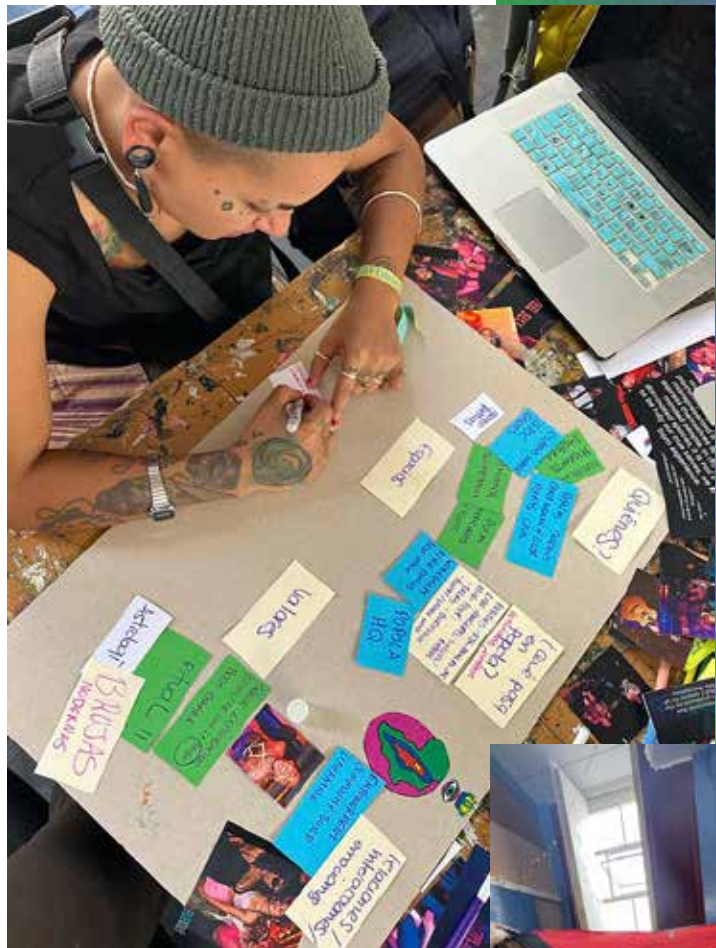
THE POWER of documentation

PRACTICING THE THEORY WITH POPOLA

As Popola was needing to communicate what they were as a community, the workshop we did together was very relevant for testing the manifesto-building method. We wanted to generate statements of intent, demands for visibility and calls for autonomy from oppressive environments, as well as define who the community was, what their goals were and how they were going to achieve them.

MAIN REFLECTIONS ON THE MANIFESTO BUILDING

The methods we used to build the manifesto served as a medium to dig into the real purpose of Popola, and by saying this I am not implying that Ivicore didn't know the core values or purpose of her initiative, instead, this was just a tool to uplift all those intentions that are already happening. We could materialize that community soul as saying that it was a tribe, where magical, fun and political rituals were happening on the dance floor, as a way of reclaiming spaces that were taken when our territories were colonized, but also as changing the history that is being told in the present and the one that is going to be shared in the future, saying that now these tribes like Popola are being a platform to defend those unrepresented voices of QPOC folks, while as promoting collaborative interactions among us.



PHOTOS: TAKEN BY ME DURING THE WORKSHOP



THE FUTURE Rave

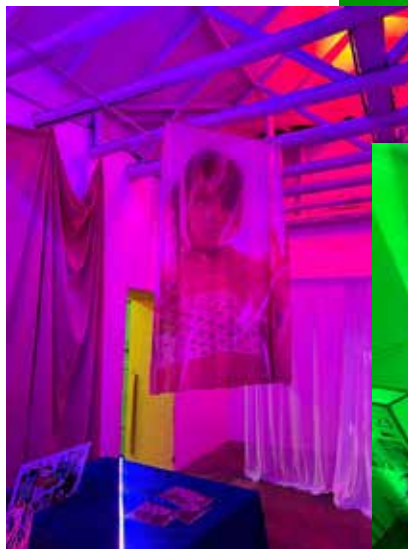
As the project progressed I was getting more convinced that my practice as a designer needed to be centered in being a facilitator for building community or supporting the ones that already exist. In the books *Feminist Designer*, *Speculative Everything* and also in the projects *Futurress*, *Depatriarchise Design* and *Design & Opressão*, I found too many ideas that were resonating with the work I was doing through *Neoperreo* and the path that I was picturing for my future practice as a Designer.

These sources reminded me that It is important to get rid of that image that the future is only based on technology, of course it is important to acknowledge the development of it, but it is vital to be careful about it, and in regions like Latin America, we have to be proud about our local knowledge, fighting against that preconception that whatever comes from the Global North is at the forefront.

I also learned that designing utopian scenarios could be a way to allow ourselves to dream and get rid of our fears, taboos or barriers from our current contexts, but these speculative futures need to be grounded to our territories, cultures and communities.

A project where I could apply these ideas was "Calentura Tropical", a five week artistic residency promoted by Night Embassy Bogotá (NEB). Along with Museo Q and other amazing artists and ravers who are part of the night scene in Bogotá,

we co-designed the future of Electronic Music in Colombia, aiming to exhibit this future in a cultural house of the city where different local collectives were called to celebrate our nightlife.



PICTURE TAKEN IN THE "MEMORIES" ROOM



GREEN PICTURES ARE FROM THE FUTURES ROOM CALLED "23RAVE23"

THE FUTURE Rave

A TRIP TO THE FUTURE WITH NEB

Corinne¹⁹ and I designed a workshop where we co-designed the rave of the future with ravers and people from the Electronic Music and queer night scene in Bogotá. We did this by traveling to the future through a time traveling meditation and visualization activity, followed by a Pestle analysis. We then imagined the objects of the rave bag, outfits, place, people/creatures invited and sounds.

We showcased the results during three nights at one of the Night Embassy events, presenting the exhibition as a work in progress process. Visitors were invited to open up the conversation again and imagine the rave of the future from a systemic and eco-social perspective, emphasizing community aspects.

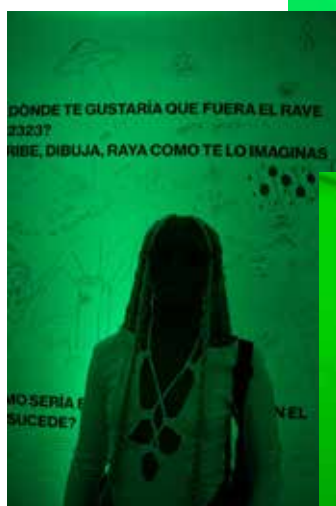
MAIN REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE RESIDENCY

Opening up the conversation about how the community in the Electronic Music and queer scene were imagining the future rave made me realize that no matter the country or culture where we are, the queer community is looking for collaborations, to just exist in every space without hiding, gaining their importance in contexts and places that have been oppressive.

I see music now more than ever as a social and political platform that unifies people on the dancefloor. Each dancer has their own experiences, problems, opinions and feelings, and by making them visible we can see how there are not just personal issues, but social causes that can thrive into political actions.²⁰

This residency was an opportunity for me to get to know what was happening in the Electronic Music, queer and Neoperreo scene back in Colombia. This also opened my eyes to the opportunities this project has to keep growing and generating collaborations between all the people who connect with Neoperreo.

ANGEL A ANGELE - @ANGELADEANGELE
(PART OF MUSED Q TEAM)



HEADPHONES WITH AUDIOS FROM THE WORKSHOP, WHERE RAVERS WERE NARRATING HOW THE RAVE OF THE FUTURE WAS GOING TO BE.

¹⁹ Corinne Viveros is a Colombian architect with whom I got to collaborate closely during this residency.

²⁰ I could build this idea inspired in the feminist statements, such as: "Women came together in small groups to share personal experiences, problems, and feelings, and with sharing publicly came the realization that what was thought to be a personal problem had a social cause and political solution" Freeman (1976).

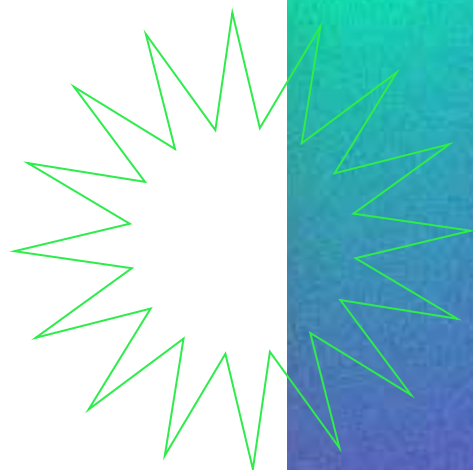
COMMUNITIES of practice

A SHORT REFLECTION

I learned from Mcentes's article called "Communities of Practice: Doing Design Differently" (2021) that Communities of practice are an alternative for gathering with other people with whom you share practices and beliefs, and what it is most valued in those shared spaces is the intention of learning while building something together, which also doesn't need to be anything formal or even professional.

A community of practice is also prioritizing the process over the output, and generating long term relationships, commitments, roles and responsibilities, through those moments and spaces of practicing and collaborating. This is a way of working with others while fighting against oppressive practices that are focused on the logic of solution-finding or fixing.

Communities of practice made me think that the platform this project is trying to create, needs to be an alive platform that allows us to thrive while learning in the process of collaborating and creating something as a community. I am also aware of how challenging this could be, but I believe that dancing is that special common ground that gives us joy and freedom, and it also generates that glue among us. In other words dancing, could be the practice through which we could keep strengthening the bonds between the members of the forming community.





Neo perriemos LONDON

NEOPERRIEMOS London

By analyzing all my findings during this process, I understood that I wanted to tackle two main challenges:

HOW MIGHT WE

Build a **Neoperreo guide** for Latin American **"Baby queers"**²¹ to navigate London and find communities in which they could explore their identity and sexuality through perreo, as well as occupying spaces where respect, love, freedom and consent are the core values?

How might we let this guide be a **live and community** platform where we as Latin American artists, and **Neoperreo lovers** can generate collaborations, supporting common interests around migration challenges, political issues, feminism, queerness, social design, art, and music, among many others?

HOW TO BRING THIS IDEAS TO LIFE

To tackle those challenges as well as measuring the impact of my design and research process, I searched for my audience and tested if Baby queers existed outside of the paper. Through an open call, I connected with Neoperreo lovers and Baby queers interested in discussing identity, sexual exploration, and safe spaces for dancing perreo. My objective was to understand their challenges and expectations while co-design a Neoperreo guide with them.

²¹ I came up with the idea of "Baby queer", thinking of how inexperienced I felt when I started exploring and questioning my identity and sexuality. So I decided to use this simile as a way of referring to someone who is just starting this exploration.

NEOPERRIEMOS London

A MULTICHANNEL GUIDE

As a result of a collaborative workshop I did with my audience of Baby Queers and also by doing some iterations with La Jeva DJ "Neoperriemos London"²² was born:

A narrated guide by and for Latinx Baby Queers. Together we are going to navigate stories, places and communities around Neoperreo in London.

What is this guide for?

This guide is for those perreo lovers, who like to shake their ass to the rythm of Dembow 🍑🔥

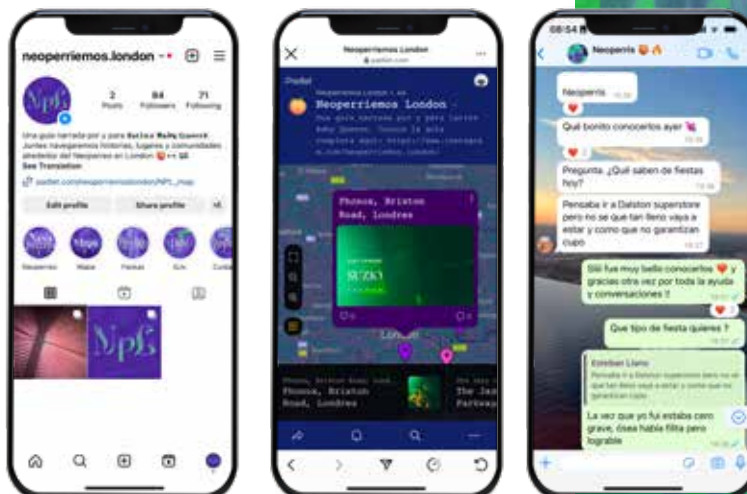
🔥 For those latinx by blood or by heart that want to connect with others from freedom, love, respect and consent.

🏳️‍🌈 For Baby Queers who are beginning to explore their sexuality and identity in London and don't know how, where and who to do it with.

👉 For those ravers who are willing to go on an adventure in search of secret locations in hidden corners of this city.

💜 And overall for humans who want to be part of a community of care in which we all can exist and be ourselves.

PHOTO: FROM 1ST POST OF @NEOPERRIEMOS.LONDON



CORE VALUES

Freedom
Love
Respect
Consent
Collaboration

AUDIENCE

- ▶ Latin American Baby queers who are exploring their identity and sexuality in London.
- ▶ Perreo and Neoperreo lovers who are looking for safe spaces to dance perreo, while finding their kin.
- ▶ Artists who are already building their careers and communities around Neoperreo and Latin American music and arts.

★ Note: This is also a platform for all of those non-Latin Americans, who arrived in the Neoperreo world by their Latino friends or even by accident, but who enjoy and connect with what is happening in this scene, respecting and promoting its values.

²² The word "Neoperriemos" transforms the genre of Neoperreo into a verb that could be understood as "Let's dance this new perreo together". The abbreviation I am going to use for this initiative is NPL.

NEOPERRIEMOS London

A MULTICHANNEL GUIDE

What is the objective of each channel?



Venues
Locations
Videos
Pictures

Organizing parties
Sharing location
Help and tips: migration
drug taking
queerness

INSTAGRAM

- Centralize all the information of the guide. Share content interactive format.
- Offer a window to get to know the Neoperreo scene in London, while making connections.
- Create connections worldwide thinking (Mainly between South America and London)

PADLET MAP

- Display an interactive map of London where showing where the Neoperreo parties happen.

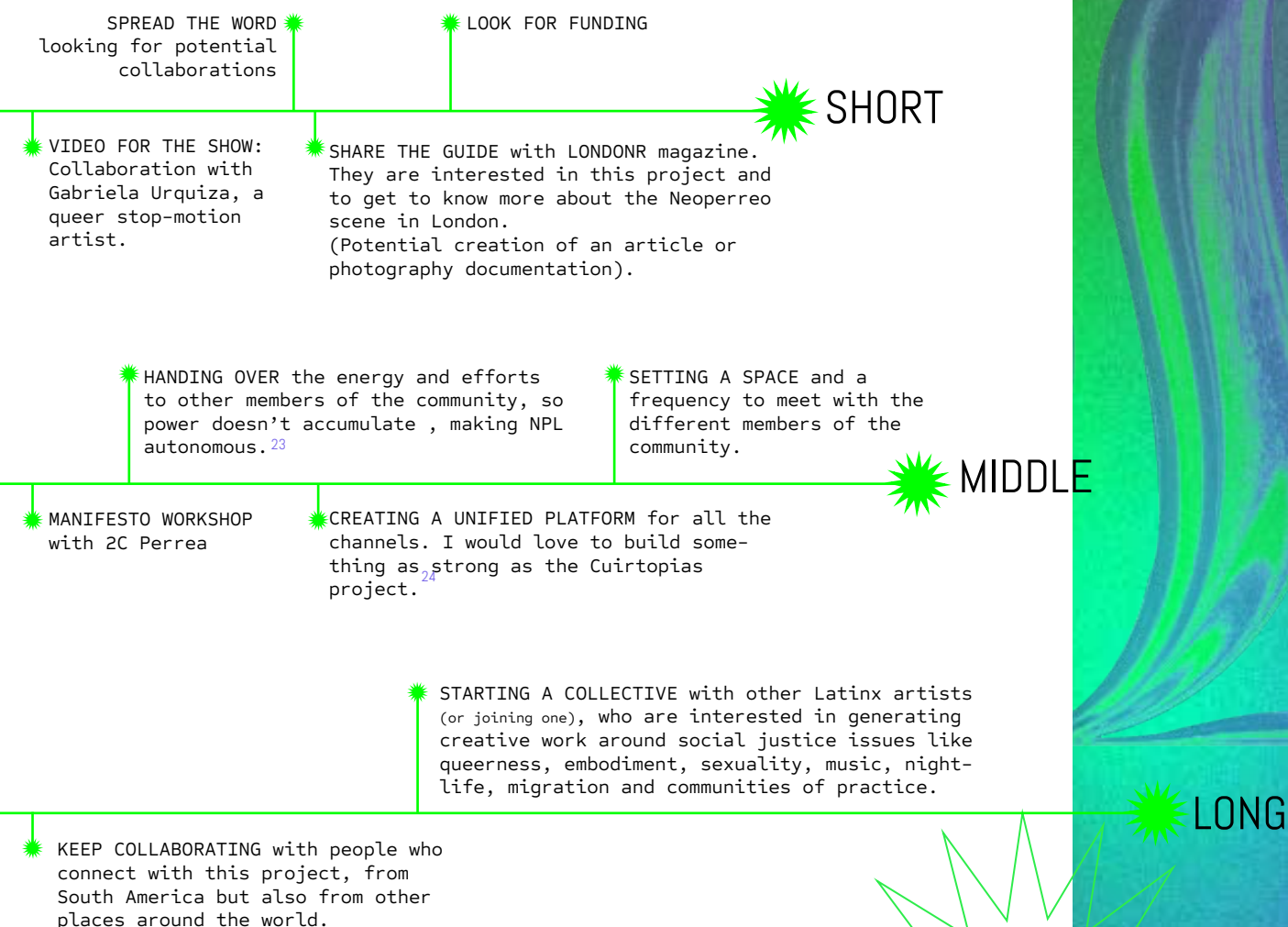
WHATSAPP

- Keep building an intimate community

These three channels are key ingredients for generating community building. NPL is the medium for sharing information and stories around Neoperreo as well as enabling meaningful connections within the community.

NEXT STEPS NpS

I look forward to taking this project further and bringing more voices to it. What I plan for the short, middle and long term is:



²³ I would like this community to be sustainable over time. I think that it actually wouldn't be a community if it was just me making decisions and playing all the roles at the time. I see a lot of potential for this to be a platform that thrives and evolves because of its people. An open source format could be explored in the future.

²⁴ Cuirtopia is a mapping project that reimagines how queer communities in Puerto Rico register, represent and document queer spaces in the Caribbean. The project also tests different formats and iterations that have been materialized in museum exhibitions, a radio show, a fictional story told via Instagram, community events, among others. The project is available at: <https://www.cuirtopia.xyz/>

THE IMPACT OF THIS project

THE PROCESS OVER THE OUTPUT

Throughout this project, I learned to value the process of making and practicing with others over the final output (if such a thing exists). All the methods I used were tools for understanding the context I was studying, but more important they were the medium to approach communities and people around the Neoperreo scene in London, and to ethically collaborate with them.

By letting the process and its methods be flexible, ethical, participatory and creative, we are building meaningful relationships, that have permitted us to:

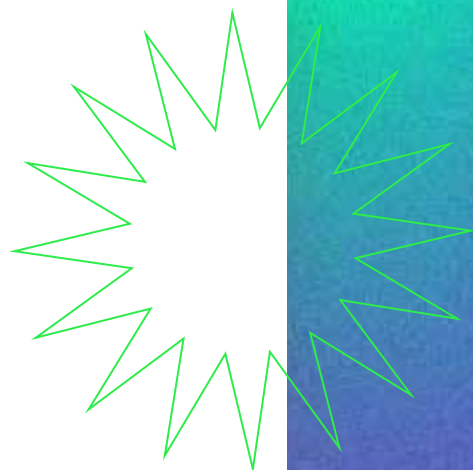
- ▶ Defined the objectives, values and interactions of a community (Popola manifesto).
- ▶ Built a platform in Colombia in which ravers, artists, queer communities and allies imagined how the rave of the future is going to be, as well as elevating people's voices to express and demand a society based on respect, love and care. (Night Embassy Residency)
- ▶ And created a guide for Baby queers to navigate Neoperreo in London, which is evolving into a community, based on collaborations and shared interests. This is strongly impacting my practice as a designer, because generating this type of social living network is not a matter of an output, a service or a product, instead is about

learning in the process, building respectful relationships and sustainable platforms for this to happen.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KEEP DOING THIS PROJECT?

Because community building is now happening! That was one of the most difficult goals to achieve in this project.

All the people who are involved in this project are shouting for social justice, love, freedom, consent and respect, and Neoperriemos London is a platform to tackle those issues we care about, as Baby queers, perreo lovers, DJs, artists, party goers and Latin American migrants. That is why I think this project is so powerful and has to keep going.



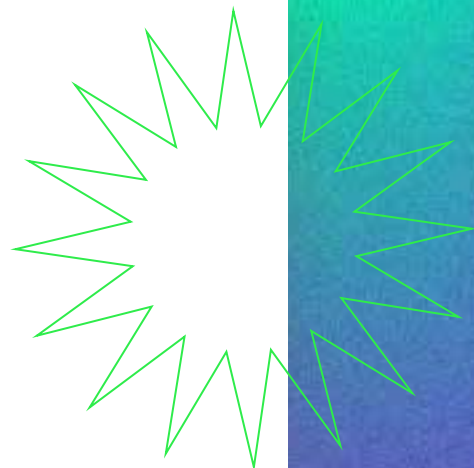
Conclusion

This project started by questioning how to find or create a queer Latinx community around the Reggaetón genre in London, also seeking spaces of inclusion, care, love, pleasure, and freedom. Throughout the process, the project conveyed a personal need for self-identity exploration and a sense of belonging, to a collective matter where different stakeholders within the Neoperreo scene (DJs, artists, ravers, perreo lovers, queers, baby queers, and Latinx migrants) were looking for similar spaces, and relationships based on collaboration and care.

The participatory and ethical methods I put in practice and also the feminist and queer theories that informed me during this journey helped me to keep weaving this collaboration within the already existing communities while addressing a powerful opportunity around building a collective platform where Latin American Baby queers could explore their identities while finding their kin in the Neoperreo scene in London. "Neoperriemos London" is now a space for them to get to know stories, places, and communities around Neoperreo. Moreover, it is also a space intending to be a community for Latin American artists and perreo lovers looking to connect with others, aiming to support and defend social and political causes around migration, queerness, art, music, and others.

Neoperriemos London will continue to be a medium for finding our kin while dancing perreo and thriving. In the future, I see this project evolving to become a collective of Latin American artists who dream of uplifting the night, queer urban culture, and the art that flourished from these realms.

Lastly, this project is not my final major project but a new start in my creative career, aligned with the causes I defend and my values and beliefs. I needed to walk this path over the past year to understand that my purpose as a designer is to keep building a world where many worlds can exist.



Glossary

I built this glossary based on the research I did during the project. Some expressions come from popular culture, therefore, their description is based on interviews and conversations with participants, colleagues and friends who are in the queer scene.

PERREO/PERREAR:

Perreo is the way of dancing to the rhythm of Reggaetón, it could be translated as “doggy dancing”, so you bend your knees and start moving your booty in circles.

GOGO DANCER:

A person who does a dance show on the stage of the party or in the middle of the dance floor. Gogo dancers are important members of the Neoperreo scene. They could be active members of the communities, going to the raves and parties to enjoy them but they also get paid the time they do their show.

RAVE:

A rave is a party that usually happens in abandoned, remote or illegal places. Electronic Music parties started happening around the 70s in cities like New York, Detroit, and Chicago, and ravers (people who attended these parties) would dance until their bodies resisted. Also, the rules and social codes of the raves are usually created by the community itself.

"If it's called a rave, there's some ex-pectations: It will go for a long time. That might need a little chemical assistance. There might be some socializing, some flirting, even some rave sex, but we're here to dance- to the point of exhaustion." Wark (2023)

MARICA /MARICAS:

Maricas or Maricas in plural, has been one of the most popular nicknames used in Latin America to refer in an offensive way to a gay or queer person. Nowadays queer people use it proudly as a way of resistance, taking out the power that the word had by appropriating it. It is also a way of using a Spanish word instead of the word “queer”, which could be perceived as a colonialist term that comes from hegemonic cultures.

BABY QUEER:

I came up with the idea of “Baby queer”, thinking of how inexperienced I felt when I started exploring and questioning my identity and sexuality. So I decided to use this simile as a way of referring to someone who is just starting this exploration.

OPOC:

Queer people of colour.



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