

Facial Hair & Hyper-Masculinity

During the first drag king workshop we're not trying to procure a theatrical effect or a caricatured stereotype of gender, but to construct a commonplace, all-purpose form of masculinity. (Preciado, 368)

How important is “passing” as male for a king? Does an absence of femininity equate a type of masculinity (and vice versa)? A camped exaggerated or hyper-masculinity is often expressed through a femininity Bottici identifies as the burden of body maintenance and accessorizing. Paraphrasing from Bottici’s lecture: women carry the burden of color, make-up, laces, rhinestones, buttons, as well as bio-care—in daily body maintenance (shaving, skin-routines) but also long term additional healthcare and doctor check-ups (gynecology, birth control). This necessary need to take a medicalized, accessorized, and pathologized turn to biology are also shared with queer and trans experiences (hormone treatments, surgical transitions). Moving away from a burden of accessorizing and body-care that constructs a femininity (or absence of masculinity), Preciado reflects on soft and simple dragging techniques in which “surprisingly minimal transformation produces an effect of maximum realism,” (Preciado, 368). For example, to change the shape of your face to appear more masculine: use a brown shade of make-up (eyeshadow, contour, concealer, etc.) to darken under eyes, inner eyes, under brow-line, under your chin and jawbone, and on the sides of your nose. You can also start to darken the areas on your face (if) you plan to have a beard or mustache.

To create the effect of facial hair with mascara: gently brush upwards on the small facial hairs on your upper lip and chin (I also like to use this technique on my eyebrows for a unibrow effect). Use a brown eyebrow brush to fill out areas that need an extra illusion of hair. For advice on facial hair patterns that would compliment your face or appear the most “natural,” minimum effort for maximum effect, look to male or masc people in your life such as brothers, fathers, uncles, etc. specifically any facial hair growth patterns during puberty.

Materials:

- Scissors
- A Lock of Hair
- Glue Stick

Directions:

- Using the scissors, cut a small lock of your hair (from the back of your head for discretion).
- On the paper, use the scissors to chop up the lock of hair into little tiny pieces.
- Apply the glue to desired areas for hair on the face, chest, or wherever...
- Before the glue dries, pat on clumps of your hair.
- Re-apply glue and hair as needed.

Reflecting on seeing themselves in a mirror wearing facial hair during one of their first drag king workshops, Preciado writes: “He’s not a staged character; he’s emerging out of what I am, the way I’ve always seen myself.” In beginning to imagine your own drag persona: How do you see yourself? How are you visible to others? How do you want others to see you? What kind of masculinity/femininity do you want to perform? Wearing drag, what aspects/absences of masculinity (or non femininity) do you want your drag to perpetuate?