

## Flavio de Carvalho, Experiencia 3, 1956

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During a warm summer day of 1956, Flavio de Carvalho, an engineer and avant-garde artist from São Paulo, walked from home to his workplace wearing a self made suit he had given the name of “New Look: summer fashion for a new man”.

This street performance was part of the series “Experiences” that Carvalho carried out as studies of crowd psychology. His suit consisted of four meticulously designed pieces: a pair of sandals, a hat, a mini skirt and a strip shirt, made from materials that allowed an ideal air circulation and maintaining lower body temperatures for the office working men in the tropical city of São Paulo. But the feminized esthetics of this clothing - imagined by the artist as unisex - on a male body interrupted the normative regime of gender specificity. The appearance of cross-dressing caused controversy and Carvalho was named by the media a ‘loony’ and an ‘exhibitionist homosexual’. But on that summer day, his morning walk gathered a crowd that was either curious, voyeur or showing respect for ‘a man dressed as a woman’. The complexity of this work also relies in its paradox; while enabling a state of liberty that overcomes a binary relation between genders, it also constricts the body to another correct form of clothing; Carvalho’s ‘New Look’ is his response to ‘hygienic problems’ caused by wearing dark office suits during tropical summer, wearing his cloths have a ‘conservative’ reason, but simultaneously a counter-cultural meaning.

For Troca-trocas, the aforementioned performance has been taken as a point of reference of an urban experience that blurs the lines of gender differentiation; serving as a counterpart of a contemporary urban experience of gender affirmation such as Gay parade. It is in between that broad spectrum that Troca-trocas will like to research the cultural construction(s) of gender and sexuality at a moment of Gay Internationalism.

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