Nicki Green, *It's Almost as if We've Existed (Tres in Una)*, 2015. Glazed earthenware, 15 ½ × 12 × 3 ½ in (39.4 × 30.5 × 8.9 cm). Courtesy the artist

PATTERN DISRUPTION

Approaching the pattern from a somewhat different angle, Jonas N. T. Becker's multimodal 2014 work *The Pile* (page 304) shifts attention away from patterns of surface decoration and toward the spaces that lie between the patterned behaviors governing so many of our lives and gender identities. Curious about what people "wanted," Becker hosted a series of public forums where he asked over two thousand participants the question, "What one thing would make your life better?" While people responded in ways that were certainly personal, most answers proved to be far less variable than one might expect. Patterns quickly emerged, and Becker set out to give these repetitions a kind of form. He created *The Pile* by translating each response into a two-dimensional image that served as a pattern for a stuffed, red-felted, hand-sewn soft sculpture.[26] Where answers clearly overlapped, the patterns were literally repeated. When displayed—as the title suggests—in a pile, the legibility of each of the individually patterned shapes is overwhelmed by the noise produced through the accrual of their similarities. Heaped upon one another, these wishes appear like a stockpile or a mass casualty of a political economy based, in part, upon a logic of endless accumulation. The result is a clear, albeit melancholic, call for the rearticulation of our desires outside capitalist logics of (re)production: a call to resist the fetishistic reification of desire by drawing viewers' awareness to the odd, unpredictable spaces that open up between the smoothly patterned objects—the spaces where desire's variability is unbounded.

Opaque (2014), produced by the collaborative partnership of Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz—who appear similarly interested in using the trope of the pattern to deconstruct the politics of desire—is a multimedia installation that includes a ten-minute filmed performance featuring Ginger Brooks Takahashi and Werner Hirsch (page 306). Claiming to be representatives of an underground organization, Takahashi and Hirsch appear to viewers in the middle of an abandoned public pool. Initially, they are hard to discern—the contours of Takahashi's silhouette meld with a glorious accumulation of the queerest pink, tiger-striped pattern imaginable, while Hirsch is enveloped in a color-coordinated plume of pink smoke. All that is solid melts into air! The performance is punctuated by the dramatic pulling back and fondling of a series of curtains, each of which represents a distinct visual logic: first opaqueness, followed by camouflage, then dazzling brilliance, and, finally, a display of loose transparency. As the action unfolds, the duo recites a desirous ode for a "proper faultless enemy" that is inspired by the writings of French novelist Jean Genet. The extravagantly queer patterning of the space of appearance functions like the

NICOLE ARCHER   DYNAMIC STATIC

Jonas N. T. Becker, *The Pile*, 2014. Installation view: "Jonas Becker: The Pile," Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, 2015. Image: © Jonas N. T. Becker. Photo: Jeff McClane

Jonas N. T. Becker, *The Pile*, 2014 (detail). Single-channel 16mm HD video, sound, color, digital C-prints, and hand-stitched red felt objects; 12 min, dimensions variable. Image: © Jonas N. T. Becker
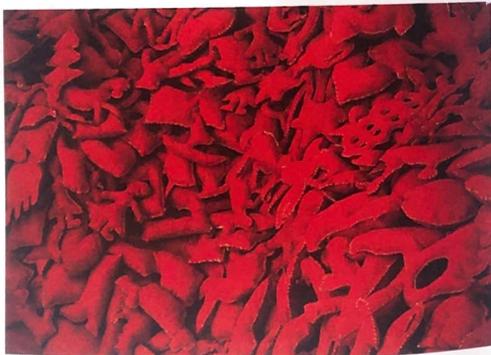
stripes of medieval Europe, theatrically blurring "the dividing lines between same and other, between accomplices and enemies."[27] *Opaque* thus forces viewers to acknowledge that "conflict" is, itself, something that is desired—enemies need to be wanted. The work demands that we ask whether queer desires might make something different of conflict, considering that normative patterns of desire have thus far led only to war—endless, all-consuming, preemptive war, which aims to defeat or obliterate difference.

Opaque challenges one to consider the unique forms of pleasure yet to be mined from the depths of the hostilities that seem to mark every level of modern human interaction, but the aesthetics of pattern disruption can also be used to concentrate attention on the disproportionate risk that some bodies are subjected to within existing cultures of violence. In *Black Patois* (2016) (page 308), Zawadi Ungadi, a black Kenyan trans* man, presents viewers with a constellation of images that are emblematic of the violent patterns of behavior that are all too often directed toward his body. The images present Ungadi literally and figuratively painted into a series of corners: as a fictionalized runner, a mythical "purse snatcher," the object of intense sexual desire, and, with his hands up, as a victim of endless suspicion and murderous rage. The brutality of living within such overwhelming patterns of racism is made abundantly clear. A sense of the different amounts of noise that one is subjected to, depending on one's particular identity coordinates, is made manifest. The work isolates a series of bodily gestures that are patterned and arranged to support a culture of antiblackness.