

# WEATHER PROOF

Christopher Gambino

Daniel H. Hoffmann

Pupa

8/14 - 9/21

Pupa(e)

"[...] eroticism relates to a knowledge of evil and the inevitability of death, it is not simply an expression of joyful passion." - Hans Bellmer

Rose Chafer Beetles pupate in June or July. Members of the Scarabaeidae family, Chafer beetles (or cockchafers) owe their name to the Old English *caefor*, meaning *gnawer* or *devourer*.<sup>1</sup> There are 35,000 Scarabaeidae beetle species worldwide. Most Scarabaeidae beetles rely on their antennae to detect scents. Typically robust and brown or black in color, they are often mistaken for wasps when in flight. Some Chafers, like the rose chafer, are brightly colored and active during the day, possessing shells that polarize light. Their larvae live underground, feeding on roots or decomposing matter. After mating, female Rose Chafer Beetles lay eggs in decaying organic matter and die. In the fall, the adults emerge to feed on pollen, nectar, and especially roses. Though poisonous to the touch, their iridescent exoskeletons adorn the flowers like living jewels.

It is as hot as a furnace. Too hot for stockings. The body swells on days like these, and so it feels foreign. The silk ribbon of my robe, wrapped around my waist, cuts me in half. Like a Bellmerian doll, I am sectioned. Across the ocean, where he is, it is 9, perhaps even closer to midnight. I cannot sleep without interruption. Once, twice, three times. Heat gets at my throat like a gloved hand, controlling my breath.

In the first dream, I am led at knife point to a farm. I am disrobed, then photographed, and locked inside a corn crib. A few moments later the same man, in new clothes, releases me. He says his twin is to blame, he is unwell. "He didn't hurt you did he?"<sup>2</sup> I wake. A wasp claws at the window, desperate and exhausted. It is loud. It arches its dying body, back and forth and back again. It cannot find a way out.

In Ancient Egypt, the beetle known as *Scarabaeus sacer* was revered as sacred. Its dung-rolling behavior was associated with sun god *Khepri*, who was believed to push the sun from the underworld across the sky. Biologically, the *S. sacer* is a type of "dung beetle" or a *telecoprid*. It forms feces into balls and rolls them to underground chambers. There, it consumes the dung over several days. When prepared to reproduce, the female *sacer* selects fine-textured feces to shape into a breeding ball, sculpting it into a hollow pear shape in which she lays a single egg. She then seals the chamber and departs.

Opens 8/14 6-10PM

3336 W Lawrence Ave, Ste. 303

Chicago, IL 60625

Saturdays 1-4

@weather\_proof on IG

www.weatherproof.zone

info@weatherproof.zone

(312) 937-1627



The larvae feed on the dung ball upon hatching, eventually finding their way out. Observing young beetles emerge from dung, the ancient Egyptians mistakenly believed that the males reproduced alone, linking the species to *Atum*, the self-generating god. Often found near dead carcasses, the beetle was thought to arise from death, making it a symbol for transformation and rebirth.

I do not hear the wasp anymore, it must have surrendered. I wake from the second dream with clenched fists. In the dream, my foot is broken, I am immobilized. A man intrudes on me, holds his hand onto my mouth and says: "Now that you're gone, I can breathe for the first time".<sup>3</sup> Quickly, he escapes with my shoes.

In the preface to Jean Genet's *The Maids and Deathwatch*, Sartre describes Solange, one of the main characters, as a form of theatrical illusion - a fragile, artful appearance formed through the deliberate negation of natural femininity. Building on Genet, Sartre emphasizes that Solange's femininity is an extreme performance, an evanescent "make-believe" crafted by human desire, which exists as a pure invention divorced from biological fact.<sup>4</sup>

During the third dream I bite the interior of my lip so hard, a salivary duct swells into a blister. In the dream, a rose chafer enters my mouth, gnawing at my tooth like a petal. I come to a parking lot, in the backseat of a car. Two men lean into the window. They mock me. Grab my purse and empty its contents, like entrails. They laugh, I am scared but cannot move. They steal all my make up. *Not like it can fix a face like yours*, they say laughing. They refuse to give it back. I realize I am drunk, sedated, that I cannot drive. I am stranded under a flickering light, they are long gone.

Hybristophilia is the neurosis that leads women to become obsessed with serial killers. Often, they construct themselves through elaborate fantasies, staging themselves as exceptions: the one woman who is not killed, who is chosen, who redeems. The killer, in this structure, becomes the embodiment of the Real (*jouissance*)<sup>5</sup> while the woman flirts with symbolic annihilation. Her obsession is not simply about love, but about proximity to death and absolute power, dramatizing femininity as both victimhood and control. In this way, they expose femininity as a fiction born at the edge of language, where fantasy and desire court death.

By now it is morning across the ocean, I finally receive his call. He tells me to undress and so I do. From my voice nothing is removed, but I follow instructions *à la lettre*. He cannot see: asks for descriptions. I comply. Disembodied, I describe my limbs for his pleasure.

When I go to sleep, I'd like his voice to find its way into me, to swallow me (w)hole.

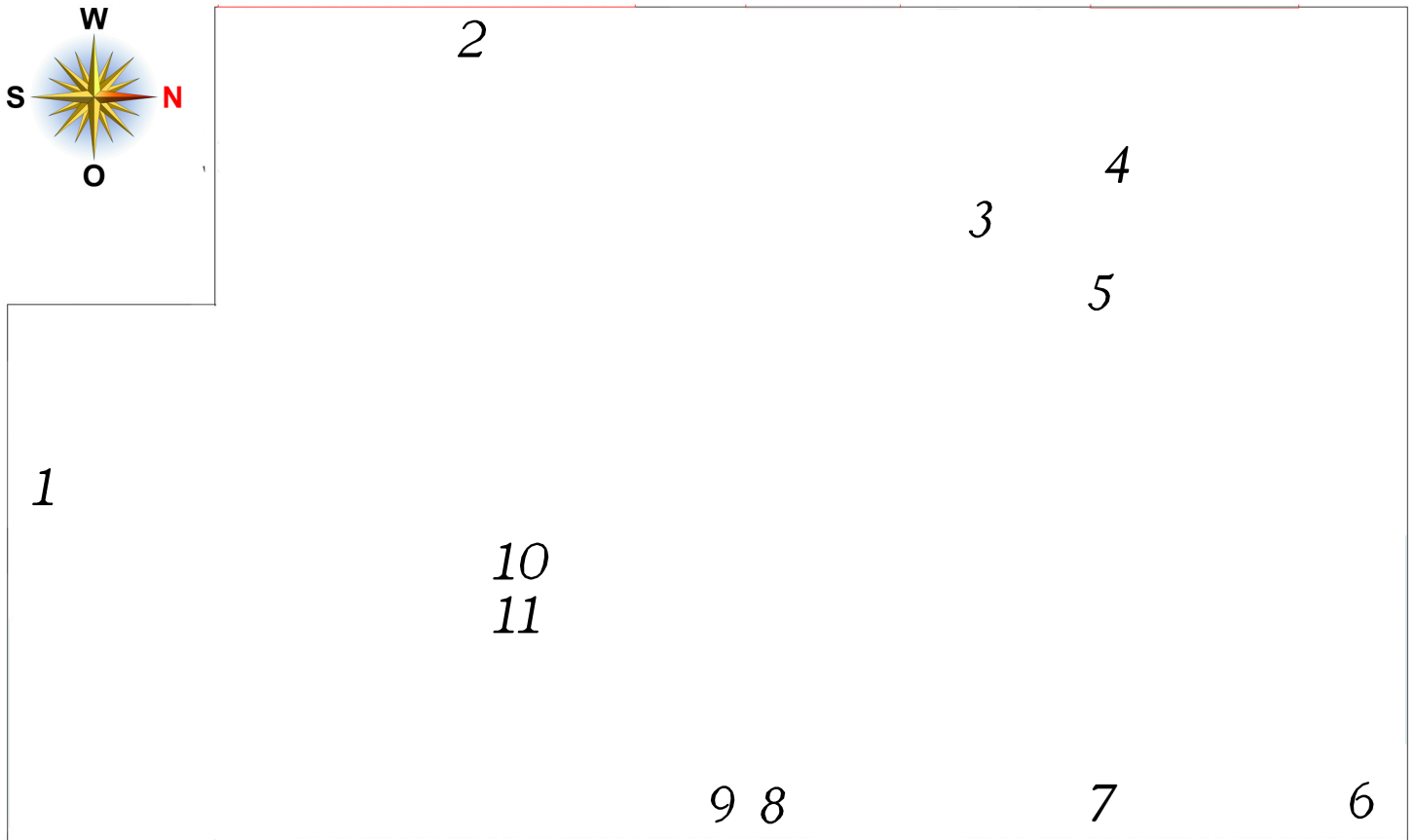
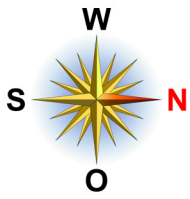
<sup>1</sup> "Chafer, \*n.\*<sup>1</sup>" *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press. Online.

<sup>2</sup> See Jerry Brudos in Ressler, Robert; Schachtman, Tom (1992). *Whoever Fights Monsters: My Twenty Years Hunting Serial Killers for the FBI*, London: St Martin's Press.

<sup>3</sup> Clarkson, Kelly. "Since U Been Gone." *Breakaway*, RCA Records, 2004

<sup>4</sup> "La femme n'existe pas" Rather, "woman" is a position structured by lack, fantasy, and language. Solange performs "woman" as a hallucinated figure of desire: a fiction sustained by fantasy and repetition. When Solange plays Madame, she enters a masquerade that reveals femininity as excess, spectacle, and psychic negotiation. One that is "not-all", that is outside the full grasp of the phallic function, but tethered to an unnamable *jouissance*. Her performance is not an expression of inner truth, rather a symptom of a structural impasse: the impossibility of being "woman".

<sup>5</sup> "superabundant vitality" (Seminar VII, 18th May 1960)



1. **Christopher Gambino** *Madame's bed*, 2025. Drawers, balusters, duct tape, doily, nutcracker, wrench, doll stand, stockings, thread. 37" x 17" x 22"

2. **Daniel H. Hoffmann** *Barbies*, 2025. Photo transfers, specimen slides, wooden dowels. Dimensions variable.

3. **Christopher Gambino** *Maria rests after a long day on her feet*, 2025. Chair, drawer, duct tape, stockings, resin, shoes. 48" x 40" x 26"

4. **Christopher Gambino** *Clumsy Peggy*, 2025. Chair, lamp, duct tape, stockings, resin, shoes. 18" x 28" x 25"

5. **Christopher Gambino** *Patient Camille*, 2025. Chair, stockings, resin, shoes. 32" x 18" x 26"

6. **Christopher Gambino** *Madame's closet*, 2025. Sprinkler, stockings, thread, doily, plate display stand, mirror. 12.5" x 12.5" x 10"

7. **Christopher Gambino** *Doll*, 2025. Mirror, scissors, shelf, stockings, thread, sealing wax. 24" x 5" x 5"

8. **Christopher Gambino** *Nurse I*, 2025. Shoes, ankle straps. 10" x 6" x 5"

9. **Christopher Gambino** *Nurse II*, 2025. Shoes, insect pins. 12" x 14" x 2"

10. **Daniel H. Hoffmann** *Boxes*, 2025. Embroidery thread, sealing wax, modified cigar boxes, lawnmower, propositions on the doll, images, redaction. Dimensions variable.

11. **Christopher Gambino** *Doting Lucy*, 2025. Table, stockings, resin, shoes. 16" x 24" x 30"

**Christopher Gambino** (b. 1996) is an artist in New York. Christopher received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2018. Christopher's work has been exhibited with Espace Maurice (Montreal, Canada,) Pop Gun (New York, NY,) Horse Room (Worcester, MA,) KMS Enterprises (New York, NY,) and Quarters Gallery Projects (Los Angeles, CA.)

**Daniel H. Hoffmann** is an entomologist, pygmalionist, and pornographer.