Chris E. Vargas introduces the Museum of Transgender History & Art (MOTHA), a semi-fictional institution that serves as a platform for exhibiting transgender art and history. More specifically, this presentation will focus on the institution’s first foray into public art and the proposal of new monuments to the 1969 Stonewall riots. This intervention occurs in the lead-up to the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, a rebellion against the routine police harassment of the NYC gay bar that is credited with sparking gay liberation and the modern LGBTQI civil rights movement in the United States. The talk will explore both the known and unknowable stories, facts, and artifacts related to the events.

Chris E. Vargas is a video-maker and interdisciplinary artist originally from Los Angeles and currently based in Bellingham, WA. From 2008 to 2013, Vargas collaborated with Greg Youmans to make the web-based trans/cisgender sitcom Falling In Love . . . with Chris and Greg. With Eric Stanley, he codirected the short film Homotopia (2006) and its feature-length sequel Criminal Queers (2015). He is the executive director of the Museum of Transgender Hirstory & Art (MOTHA), a conceptual arts and hirstory institution that highlights trans art’s contributions to the cultural and political landscape. His work has been exhibited at Tate Modern, Palais de Tokyo, LACE, Centre for Contemporary Arts Glasgow, and the New Museum among other venues. http://www.chriservargas.com/