

# Hans & Nico

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**Hans is a porn actor.**

**He contacted  
me on social  
media after  
seeing my work.**

He wanted some drawings of him to post on his own platforms. The drawing session was full of seductive and suggestive poses, and he explained the tricks he's using to build his career and differentiate himself from others.

He fully integrates the camera into his work. Usually, actors do not acknowledge it. He makes it his main interaction, his pivot, his central point, and addresses directly the person who is behind the screen.

They share a moment together. Or are they sharing a moment with him?

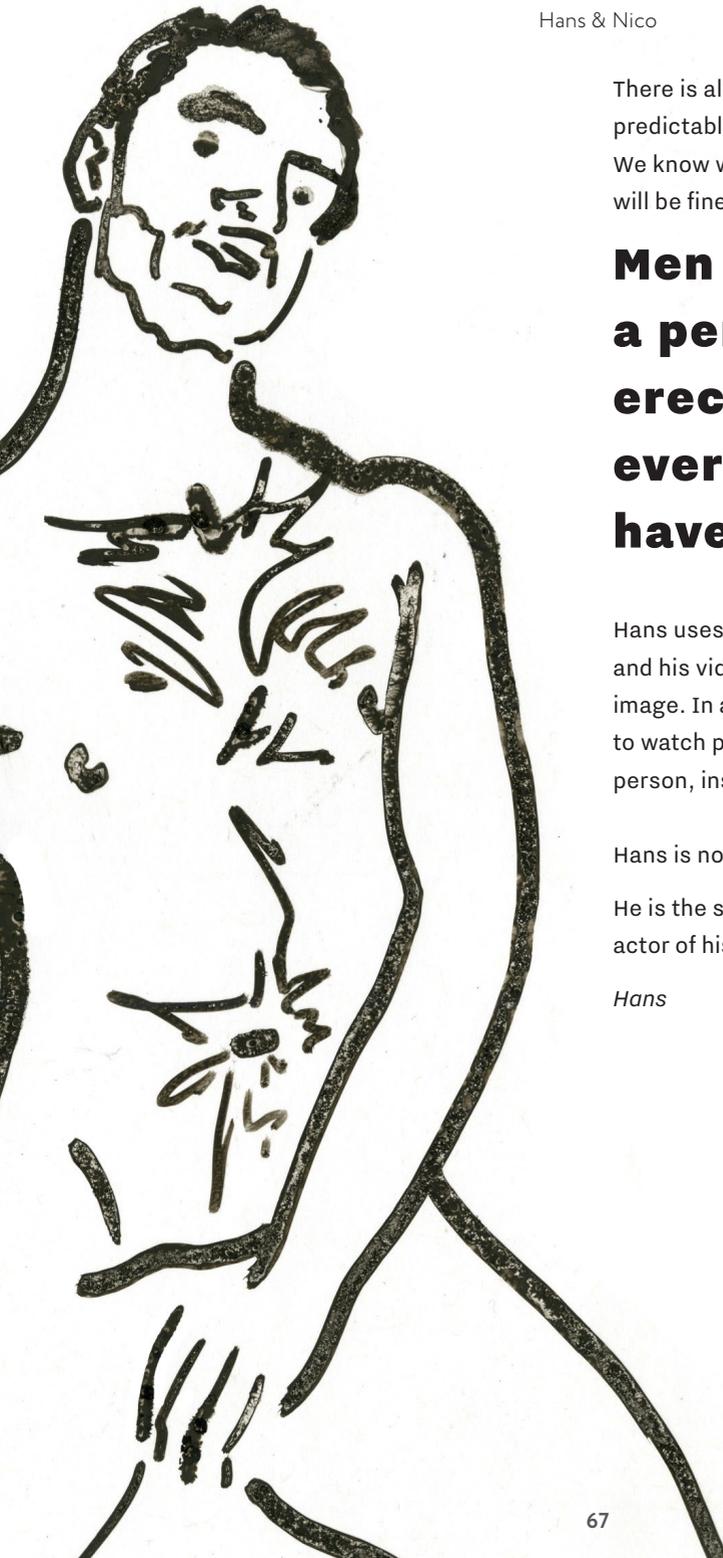
Recently I've seen more videos that use this way of filming. I see the influence of amateur clips, filmed with mobile phones that take us to the heart of the act. Often zoomed in too close, with a trembling hand, facing someone who can't help but look at the camera. They now have their own categories, with some sites even entirely dedicated to amateur videos.

Hans reflects on this phenomenon as we start discussing the changes it brings. Phones are part of everyday life. Recording your actions has become a habit. In a society where everything is performance and where if something has not been broadcast it has not happened, sex tapes become a new proof of personal value. When watching a video we feel pleasure by projecting ourselves into the scene as if we were part of it.

But what happens if we become the scene? If we become the actor? The participation of the phone in those moments introduces a connection to the other, to others. We do not just record, we look at what we record, living the moment through product of the screen, already seeing from the vantage of others. Already in the future. The action becomes a pornographic video like all the others, reassuring in a sense because it is no longer an intimate moment, full of pressure.

It's a moment where you can follow rules already dictated by hundreds of other videos, where the ultimate goal is to capture ejaculation in the most blazing way.





There is also something comfortably predictable about pornographic movies. We know what will happen. Everything will be fine.

## **Men will have a permanent erection, and everyone will have an orgasm.**

Hans uses familiar codes. Social media, and his videos, build an accessible image. In a time when people rarely pay to watch porn, he sells himself, as a person, instead of selling his acts.

Hans is not - or not yet - a porn star.

He is the symbol of the pornographic actor of his generation.

*Hans*

# **When I met Nico, the first thing I asked them was: *What pronouns do you prefer to use?***

This led me to learn the first thing in a long series. For the question is not what pronouns they prefer, as if it were a choice from a list of possibilities, with the verdict in the hands of the person who asked. The question should be: *what pronouns do you use?*, full stop.

Nico's pronouns are they/them: what people sometimes call 'neutral', although this category implies a certain way of reading gender. Nico is a non-binary trans person, who considers themselves to be neither man nor woman, but man AND woman, but also neither a man nor a woman.

I also use non-binary pronouns. It was interesting to confront our positions here, because our rationales are very different.

Words are important. When they are repeated on a daily basis, they influence

our behaviour. For example, I do not like to say gay because that means being a man who has relationships with men. Using the term queer allows me to open these preferences to non-binary people, but also to women. Similarly, using they/them pronouns allows me to not be defined by the masculine gender that was assigned to me at birth, although I endorse most of its traits.

My ideal society would be ungendered, where the very idea of gender would disappear. We are far from it. But I do not see a single reason that forces us to keep these notions of gender apart from habit.





However, when I explain my vision to Nico, they confront me with a simple problem: how to solve gender inequality if there is no gender? For this ideal society to work, it would take decades of deconstruction and work on the different problems these inequalities create. Without gender, we could no longer, for example, identify hate crimes against homosexuals.

In my ideal society, being homosexual would no longer be a problem, because homosexuality would no longer exist. People would theoretically be open to person-based attraction, and would no longer have gender as a prerequisite

Nico's arguments lead me to think of my use of gender-neutral pronouns. Do I skip a step by using they/them, while generally endorsing the physical and mental traits that are attributed to a

man? Is this a way to avoid confronting the problems related to masculinity? Instead of working to change the image of my biological gender, which makes me feel bad/not represented, I erase it. Instead of changing society, do I save my skin in a selfish way?

Similar questions arise regarding the term 'gay', at a time when gay cisgender men are strongly criticised for taking up too much space, often neglecting the other letters of the acronym LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual - sometimes read as allies-, + including pansexuals, 2-spirits, and other sexual minorities).

*Nico*

**Is identifying as queer a way of saying *I am not part of the problem* instead of trying to solve it?**