

# Press Release Program 2024

Berlin, 28 November 2023

KW Institute for Contemporary Art is proud to announce its program for 2024, including the group exhibition *Poetics of Encryption* as well as exhibitions and projects by **Luiz Roque**, **Pia Arke**, **Jimmy DeSana & Paul P.** and **James Richards & Billy Bultheel**.



Luiz Roque, still from *White Year*, 2013. Performer: Glamour Garcia. Courtesy of the artist and Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo/Brussels/Paris/New York. © the artist.

## **KW Digital:**

### ***Poetics of Encryption***

17 February – 26 May 2024

Curator: Nadim Samman

Assistant Curator: Linda Franken

Curatorial Assistant: Lara Scherrieble

Though we rely on digital tools for many things, we rarely understand how they work. Moreover, due to the proprietary nature of much corporate tech, even the most curious among us cannot gain deeper insight. Today, we are forced to come to terms with our relative lack of power in the face of inscrutable systems. What symptoms of this personal and political drama register in the cultural field? What moods, symbols, or narrative frames capture the aesthetics and politics of exclusion,

occlusion, secrecy, and speculation concerning technology's *inside*? This extensive group exhibition at KW builds upon the recent book by Nadim Samman titled *Poetics of Encryption: Art and the Technocene*. It surveys an imaginative landscape marked by Black Sites, Black Boxes, and Black Holes—terms that indicate how technical systems capture users, how they work in stealth, and how they distort cultural space-time. These themes form the basis three chapters that play out across all gallery floors at KW. Spanning analogue and digital media, *Poetics of Encryption* features both historic and newly commissioned work by more than forty international artists.

Featuring artists: Nora Al-Badri, Morehshin Allahyari, American Artist, Emmanuel Van der Auwera, Gillian Brett, Émilie Brout & Maxime Marion, Juliana Cerqueira Leite, Julian Charrière, Joshua Citarella, Clusterduck, Juan Covelli, Kate Crawford & Vladan Joler, Sterling Crispin, Simon Denny, enorê, Roger Hiorns, Tilman Hornig, Rindon Johnson, Andrea Khôra, Jonna Kina, Oliver Laric, Eva & Franco Mattes, Most Dismal Swamp, Carsten Nicolai, Simone C. Niquille, Trevor Paglen, Matthias Planitzer, Jon Rafman, Rachel Rossin, Sebastian Schmieg, Charles Stankievech, Troika, UBERMORGEN, Nico Vascellari, Zheng Mahler, among others. The exhibition architecture has been made in collaboration with architect Jürgen Mayer H. A dedicated website-as-catalogue also features three 'web-first' artistic commissions, rich media, and a bespoke AI chatbot. See [poeticsofencryption.kw-berlin.de](http://poeticsofencryption.kw-berlin.de)

The *KW Digital Program* in 2023–2024 is supported by Volkswagen Group.

### **Pause: James Richards & Billy Bultheel**

#### ***Workers in Song***

7–9 June 2024

Curator: Léon Kruijswijk

Curatorial Assistant: Nikolas Brummer

*Workers in Song* is a collaboration between visual artist James Richards (b. 1983, UK) and composer Billy Bultheel (b. 1987, BE), who find one another through the expanded approach towards their discipline. Bringing together new music, archival film and performative text, the performance is haunted by histories of occult photography and spectral music as well as more quotidian pleasures such as internet hook-ups, fandom, and Franz Schubert's *Winterreise*.

Conceived to be episodic in structure, compositions are reworked, videos are added or replaced, and new musicians are invited into the ensemble as it travels. Situated in KW's main hall, *Workers in Song* turns it into a musical Frankenstein, taking apart the seamless and unified apparatus of the cinema or chamber concert. Songs and images come flickering and humming into life, and performers shift in front and behind the audience, weaving together an array of cover versions, interruptions, distortions and homages. *Workers in Song* questions the boundaries between liveness and the prerecorded, between presence and absence, between ghosts and the archive.

Co-commissioned by WIELS Centre for Contemporary Art, Batalha Centro de Cinema, Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, and KW Institute for Contemporary Art.

Funded by Flanders, State of the Art, and supported by Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin, and Kemmler Foundation.

**Luiz Roque*****Estufa***

6 July – 20 October 2024

Curator: Léon Kruijswijk

Curatorial Assistant: Lara Scherrieble

In the summer of 2024, KW presents the first mid-career survey of the artist Luiz Roque (b. 1979, BR), whose practice inhabits a space between expanded cinema, visual art and critical theory. His artistic methodology fuses his interest in the legacies of modernism, pop culture, queer (bio) politics, and science fiction as he narrates the challenges of various—predominantly Brazilian—subcultures and marginalized voices, and as he imagines alternative realities.

Roque's sculptural video installations explore the fine line between form and content, in which filming techniques and methods of screening and presentation are as important as the subject matter they present. The artist's anachronistic approach culminates in timeless montages and environments, while simultaneously disclosing the urgency of pressing socio-political issues of these communities. His fascination for eerie and dream-like atmospheres resonates on a smaller scale in his ceramic work. The exhibition at KW brings together a body of work spanning two decades—including new ceramics and a newly commissioned film installation—and is accompanied by a publication to reflect further on Roque's work.

**Pia Arke*****Arctic Hysteria*****6 July – 20 October 2024**

Curator: Sofie Krogh Christensen

Assistant Curator: Linda Franken

KW, in collaboration with the John Hansard Gallery, Southampton (UK), presents the first exhibition of artist Pia Arke (1958–2007) to be shown outside of Kalaallit Nunaat, also known as Greenland, and the Nordic countries.

From the late 1980s until the beginning of the 2000s, Pia Arke mapped the intricate relations between time, memory, space, identity, and myth in pictures of and from Greenland. Born to a Kalaallit mother and a Danish father, she wove biographical components of her own complex history into her work. Rendered in Arke's own words, her images are about the silence that envelopes the ties between Greenland and Denmark, and how she herself was born into that silence. Arke consciously slips between the roles of artist, ethnographer, and explorer, while drawing on different historical, vernacular and archival sources. She is considered a pioneering voice in the decolonial discourses in the Nordic and Arctic regions and continues to influence them today.

*Arctic Hysteria* takes its title from an influential work series by Pia Arke and brings together her photographic, sculptural, performative and written work, as well as her work on paper. It aims to shed light on the narratives enclosing the colonial relations between Greenland and Denmark, as seen through Arke's works, and to open it up to a discussion of continuing colonial structures at large. While Arke's practice is born from the bind between the two countries, it unfolds as a structural feminist critique. *Arctic Hysteria* revolves around her methods as projected through the (female) body, in particular Arke's use of performative strategies—montage, staging, re-enactment—with which she attempted to create a sense of belonging and critical self-reflection.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue with newly commissioned texts to discuss different aspects of Arke's practice within an international discourse, with an emphasis on voices of contemporary feminist researchers.

The exhibition and publication are produced in collaboration with John Hansard Gallery, Southampton (UK).

**Jimmy DeSana & Paul P.**

***Ruins of Rooms***

6 July – 20 October 2024

Curator: Krist Gruijthuisen

Assistant Curator: Linda Franken

*Ruins of Rooms* looks at the notion of portraiture through the lens of Jimmy DeSana (b. 1949, d. 1990, US) and Paul P. (b. 1977, CA).

Jimmy DeSana was a photographer whose portrayal of New York's East Village scene in the early 1970s would prove to be highly influential later in terms of sensibility, playfulness and storytelling. Starting out shooting nudes set against the uniform architecture of his suburban childhood, he would continue to focus on exploring the human body throughout his artistic career. DeSana's portfolio is extensive, typified by contorted limbs, concealed figures, saturated colors, and surreal mise-en-scène. A fixture in New York's punk and no-wave scene and the queer fetish subculture in the late 1970s and early 1980s, he also dabbled in music photography, taking early portraits of musicians like Yoko Ono, John Giorno, David Byrne, and Debbie Harry—like him, members of the city's avant-garde scene. Contracting HIV in the late 1980s precipitated a radical change in his artistry: a shift towards abstract and otherworldly imagery that also reflected a shift away from the body as a subject, both as a result of the changes in his own body and the polarizing political climate of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Paul P. is an artist, known since the early 2000s for his melancholy drawings and paintings and, in recent years, for sculptures in the form of furniture. Drawing from and re-imagining existing images of young gay men, he finds most of the subjects of his portraiture in the archives of gay erotic magazines, particularly those published in the years between the onset of gay liberation and the nascent catastrophe of the AIDS crisis. Employing a mode akin to late 19th century portrait painters, his fragile and dreamlike works remove and liberate his subjects from their highly specific context and shroud them in timeless and seductive mystery. The artist's more recent work has further developed an expression of beauty coupled with cultural tragedy, presenting his brooding subjects alongside atmospheric abstractions, crepuscular landscapes, and allegorical sculpture.

*Ruins of Rooms* presents works that span the entirety of both oeuvres, bringing them into dialogue for the first time.

The exhibition is generously supported by KW Freunde.

## **BPA// Exhibition 2024**

November – December 2024

Curator: Linda Franken

KW and BPA// Berlin program for artists founded their partnership in 2020. BPA// is a two-year independent mentoring program that fosters exchange between emerging and established Berlin-based artists. Founded in 2016 by Angela Bulloch, Simon Denny, and Willem de Rooij, BPA// organizes studio visits, public talks, and presentations. The BPA// Berlin program for artists Exhibition at KW will show works by the artists of the final year produced over the course of their participation in BPA//.

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The exhibitions and projects within the program of 2024 are in collaboration with and/or supported by:

**KW**



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*Titles and exhibition dates are subject to change*