

Press Release Summer Program 2024

Berlin, 18 June 2024

KW Institute for Contemporary Art is pleased to present its Summer Program of 2024, which continues to explore the complexities of (self-)representation, in particular through the lens of portraiture. It examines our relationship to *looking* and *being looked at* through the work of **Luiz Roque, Pia Arke, Jimmy DeSana & Paul P.**

This season marks the last under the directorship of **Krist Gruijthuisen**.



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

Luiz Roque

Estufa

6 July – 20 October 2024

Curator: Léon Kruijswijk

Curatorial Assistant: Lara Scherrieble

Estufa is the first mid-career survey of the artist Luiz Roque (b. 1979, BR). Roque's practice inhabits a space between expanded cinema, visual art, and critical theory. His artistic methodology fuses an interest in the legacies of modernism, pop culture, queer (bio-)politics, and science fiction. This anachronistic approach culminates in timeless montages and environments while often disclosing the urgency of pressing socio-political issues of specific communities and subcultures. His open-ended, short videos are speculative, leaving the viewer wondering about the array of possibilities within alternative realities. The past, present, and future coalesce in each video, resulting in captivating trans-temporal amalgams.

Roque's sculptural video installations explore a fine line between form, color, and content, with filming techniques and methods of screening and presentation reinforcing the subject matter. This expanded methodology towards the medium of video seamlessly extends to the architectural spaces in which his work is presented. Roque pushes for a thoughtful exchange between architecture and artwork, and, yet, they remain singular, their respective boundaries never dissolving entirely.

Estufa is Portuguese for greenhouse. The exhibition takes its title from an eponymous artwork that Roque created with the artist Leticia Ramos in 2004. A large greenhouse filled with tropical plants and flowers is both the subject and setting of the video. This is the earliest work featured in the show, framing an exhibition that looks back on exactly 20 years of Roque's artistic experimentation, production, development, growth, and (con-)fused temporalities. The exhibition is accompanied by the artist's first monograph.

The exhibition is supported by Mendes Wood and Isla Flotante Galería.

Media partner: ARTE, Dussmann das KulturKaufhaus, Yorck Kinogruppe, STRÖER

Pia Arke

Arctic Hysteria

6 July – 20 October 2024

Curator: Sofie Krogh Christensen

Academic Trainee and Curatorial Assistant: Aykon Süslü

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

From the late 1980s until the early 2000s, Arke questioned the intricate relations of identity, memory, and representation between Denmark and Greenland. Spanning photography, performance, text, collage, sculpture, and video, her work grew from an urge to map her family history within the countries' coloniality. In Arke's own words, her images are about the silence that envelops the ties between Greenland and Denmark, and how she was born into that silence. The daughter of an Inuk mother and a Danish father, she carved out an identity that couldn't be defined as either Danish or Greenlandic, weaving biographical components into her artworks while drawing on different historical, vernacular, and archival sources.

Arctic Hysteria brings together a selection of over 100 of Pia Arke's works, and seeks to introduce them and their inherent narratives to a wider international audience. Taking its title from her influential, eponymous work series from 1996–1997, it engages Arke's focus on the condition and role of the (female) Inuit body and her use of performative strategies—montage, staging, re-enactment—in an effort to create a sense of belonging and stimulate critical self-reflection.

Arke is a pioneering artistic voice in the postcolonial circles of the Nordic and circumpolar regions, yet her work wasn't fully recognized within the Danish art establishment and the broader public during her lifetime. With Greenland still being an autonomous region under the Kingdom of Denmark today, Arke's work proves to be fundamental to the discussion about the continuing Danish presence in the Arctic as well as to contemporary Nordic and Greenlandic decolonial thinking.

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive publication with newly commissioned texts by contemporary feminist scholars, who place Arke's practice within a wider international discourse.

The exhibition at KW is supported by the New Carlsberg Foundation. 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). With their works set in a range of different interiors, the artists are brought into dialogue for the first time.

Jimmy DeSana was a photographer whose portfolio spans works from the late 1960s until 1990 when he died of an AIDS-related illness. Growing up queer in postwar suburban Atlanta informed his early black-and-white series *101 Nudes* (1972/1991), for which he arranged his and his friends' naked bodies in middle-class domestic environments. Moving to New York in 1973, he distributed his work through local mail art networks and became a frequent contributor to General Idea's *File* magazine. A fixture in New York's punk and no-wave scene and queer fetish subculture in the late 1970s and early 1980s, DeSana was known for taking portraits among the city's avant-garde. He returned to staging nude models in mundane settings for his colorfully lit *Suburban* series (1979–85), continuing his explorations of consumerism and S-M aesthetics. Contracting HIV in the mid 1980s led to changes in his body that shifted his artistry towards more abstract and experimental imagery, often capturing everyday objects, as seen in *Grill* (1987) and *Chair* (1988).

Paul P. has been known for his melancholy drawings and paintings since the early 2000s. His mostly untitled portraits of young men are inspired by photographs from gay erotic magazines found in the LGBTQ2+ archives in Toronto, specifically, those from the years between the onset of gay liberation in the late 1960s and the nascent AIDS crisis in the early 1980s. With an interest in the historical methodologies of representing homosexual desire, P. appropriates this explicit archival material, employing the coded visual language of late 19th-century painters. His fragile works remove his subjects from their original context and reimagine their faces to hold both the memory of ancient queer innuendo and the premonition of future tragedies. More recently, Paul P. began

creating sculptures in the form of furniture. The delicate wooden folding screens, desks and stools move between the functional and the sculptural, inspired by Edward William Godwin, a Victorian design reformer, Eyre de Lanux, Art Deco designer-decorator, and artist Scott Burton who was contemporaneous with DeSana.

Ruins of Rooms functions like a matryoshka doll. It expands our understanding of portraiture through an overlapping conversation between artists of different generations and is dedicated to those lost.

The exhibition is generously supported by KW Freunde.

Media partner: Siegessäule

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