

Press kit

Summer program 2024

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Press Release

Berlin, 5 July 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 envelopes 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

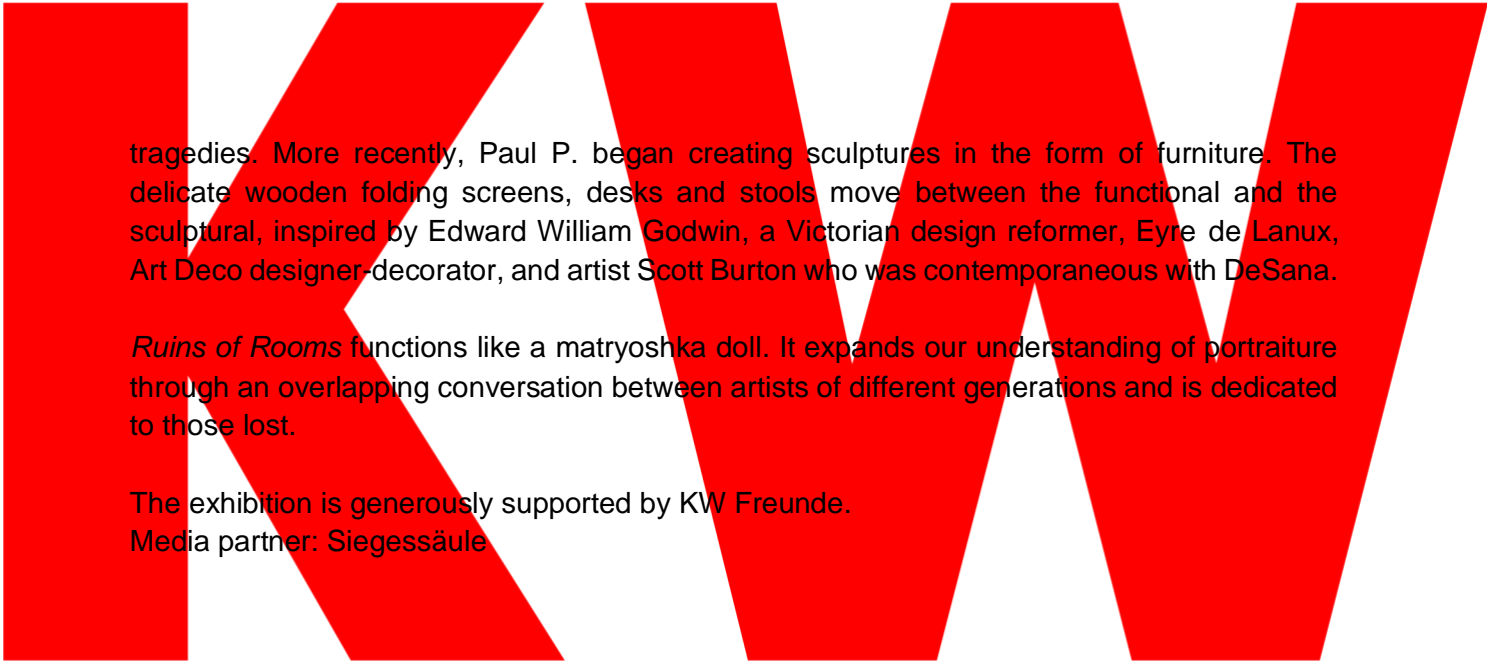
Curator: Krist Gruijthuisen

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

KW

Luiz Roque

Estufa

Curatorial text

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. In one sequence, purple and pink smoke is blown through the green plants, gradually taking over the entire image. This haze dissipates to focus sharply on flowers with the colors identical to the smoke. In the realm between the visible and the opaque, the artwork alludes to the tension between the natural and artificial factors that stimulate growth. 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.

Legacies of Modernism and Sci-Fi

The video *Modern* (2014) is presented at KW as an introduction to Roque's methodology of challenging the lingering legacies of modernism. Seemingly taking place in the halls of Tate Britain, Henry Moore's bronze sculpture *Recumbent Figure* (1938) encounters a provocative counterpart: a dancer completely covered in a curvaceous black latex bodysuit. The outfit references the extravagant Leigh Bowery, who was a key figure in the London club scene of the 1980s and 90s. Moving to upbeat house music, the dancing figure approaches the sculpture inquisitively and provocatively, and blurs the boundaries between inertia and activity, iconography and fetish, and the canon and the underground. Played on a 4:3 rear projection

TV—an early 2000s technique to increase the screen size that outdated quickly—the device adds another time layer to the installation, further pushing the artwork into ambiguous realm.

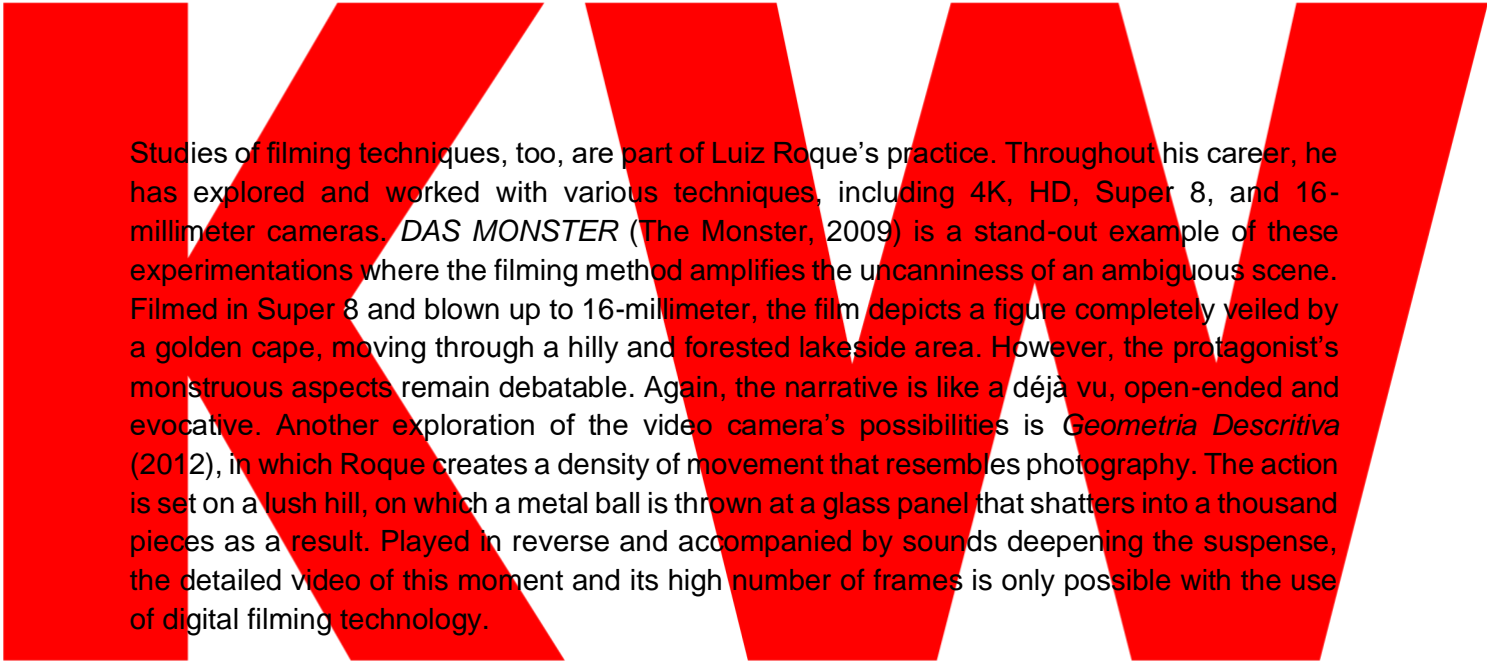
In *Ano Branco* (White Year, 2013), set in 2005, Roque combines a documentary-like format with dystopian sci-fi elements. At the start of the video, a person impersonating Beatriz Preciado delivers a speech about how technologies of sex, gender and sexuality belong to a new form of power. Subsequently leaping ahead 25 years, a trans woman becomes the protagonist and initially finds herself having a flirtatious moment in a funicular railway, bathing in golden-hour sunlight. The socio-political situation, however, appears to be grim. In a later scene, she receives treatment from a robot in an unspecified clinic. A text clarifies that the World Health Organization has removed gender identity disorders from its list of medical classifications, forcing trans people to find alternatives to medical care. With this work, the artist expresses concerns about the precarity of emancipated positions in a political landscape characterized by the global rise of populism and imagines the outcomes of regressive discourses gain determining influence.

Shaping Realities

The world order in *Zero* (2019) is of a different kind. The protagonist, who is a furry dog, flies solo through a desert landscape in a luxury private jet. At 12:01 pm, a food dispenser pops open and serves the dog a single pill, underscoring the ambiguity of the universe the animal is traveling through. Whatever the nature of this world, it certainly appears to be devoid of human life. Then, a mirage of skyscrapers shimmers on the desert horizon, followed by close-up shots of high-rises with reflective windows that turn buildings into equal protagonists. *Zero* suggests a rigid yet open-ended juncture of the here and now, a new start from scratch with a disparate distribution of power. The work further illustrates the non-hierarchical approach Roque takes towards his protagonists. They can be animals and buildings like in this film and in *Urubu* (Vulture, 2021), or they can be artworks and people like in *Modern*. Their equality lies in the fact that they the same importance in the artist's worlds.

Roque's fascination for (post-)modernist and brutalist architecture is reflected in the *Zero* installation at KW, among others. The glass wall showing the projection opens the view onto *Tegeler Weg* (1984/2005), a site-specific work at KW by Olaf Metzger, which is often covered during other exhibitions. Considered in the context of Roque's subject matters, the concrete bricks can be loosely associated with modernist architecture methods in Brazil that are used to connect indoor and outdoor spaces in an equatorial or (sub-)tropical climate. The weightiness that is often a defining feature of these architecture styles becomes apparent in the tall, trapezoid plinth of *Estufa* that Roque developed for the work in 2019. This sculptural element forms an impenetrable presence not unlike that of, say, a massive brutalist column.

Luiz Roque's accumulated studies of architecture and sculpture, of color and form, materialize on a smaller scale in his ceramic works. Some of them are existing works, others are newly commissioned for the exhibition at KW, where this strand of his work is presented on an institutional level for the first time. Created intuitively, the artist's fascination for eerie and dream-like atmospheres resonates in the ceramic pieces. Although the medium may contrast sharply with the medium of moving images at first glance, the artist observes similarities between the process of producing ceramics and producing analog film, particularly in their relation to time and chemistry. In both cases, the core materials need to be burned, while the exact result remains unclear until the very end of the creation process.



Studies of filming techniques, too, are part of Luiz Roque's practice. Throughout his career, he has explored and worked with various techniques, including 4K, HD, Super 8, and 16-millimeter cameras. *DAS MONSTER* (The Monster, 2009) is a stand-out example of these experimentations where the filming method amplifies the uncanniness of an ambiguous scene. Filmed in Super 8 and blown up to 16-millimeter, the film depicts a figure completely veiled by a golden cape, moving through a hilly and forested lakeside area. However, the protagonist's monstrous aspects remain debatable. Again, the narrative is like a déjà vu, open-ended and evocative. Another exploration of the video camera's possibilities is *Geometria Descritiva* (2012), in which Roque creates a density of movement that resembles photography. The action is set on a lush hill, on which a metal ball is thrown at a glass panel that shatters into a thousand pieces as a result. Played in reverse and accompanied by sounds deepening the suspense, the detailed video of this moment and its high number of frames is only possible with the use of digital filming technology.

A choreography of three films is shown in KW's main hall, each of them launching the spectator into a different trans-temporal realm. *S* (2017) starts with a shot of *Cubo Vazado* (Hollow Cube, 1951) by Franz Weissmann, after which three androgynous performers take their dancing skills to an empty metro carriage and tunnel, as if they are trying to find the vacant spaces within modern society in which they can express their flamboyant selves to the fullest. *República* (2020) is a poetic meditation on queer life, biopolitics, migration and movement revolving around the vibrant eponymous district and the landmark Copan Building in downtown São Paulo. The unusual square and circular aspect ratios of these two videos are an artistic method employed by Roque to represent the narratives of specific subcultures and communities through alternative formats. The newly commissioned video *Clube Amarelo* (Yellow Club, 2024) combines 16-millimeter and HD film, in which people gather in a seaside sauna, bathing in light from the sun as much as the moon, following contact with non-human species and pharmacological substances. Their otherworldly state of being transcends any conceivable mode. It remains opaque whether Roque wants the state to appear desirable or not.

Biography

Luiz Roque's (* 1979, BR) moving image work is situated between expanded cinema, visual art and critical theory. He also works with ceramics. Roque has had solo exhibitions at CAPC, Bordeaux (2023); PROA21, Buenos Aires (2022); VAC, Austin (2021); Pivô, São Paulo (2020); CAC Passerelle, Brest (2020); New Museum, New York (2019); MAC Niterói, Rio de Janeiro (2018); Tramway, Glasgow (2017), among others.

His work has been included in group exhibitions in places like Kunsthalle Münster (2024); Portikus, Frankfurt (2024); the 12th Göteborg Biennial for Contemporary Art, (2023); The Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (2023); 59th International Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2022); MASP, São Paulo (2017), MoMA PS1, New York (2016) and the 32nd São Paulo Biennial (2016), among many others.

Public Program

Open Studio

From person to self-portrait

7 July 24, 1–5 pm

Guided Tour for teachers

11 July 24, 4.30–6 pm

Curator's Tour

with Léon Kruijswijk

19 July 24, 5 pm

Concert:

Mavi Veloso

Travesti Biológica

20 July 24, 8 pm

Holiday Workshop:

In the middle of Mitte – Exploring the city artistically

22–25 July 24, 11 am – 3 pm

Screening

25 July 24, 9.30 pm

Long Night of Museums

at KW

24 August 24, 6 pm – 2 am

Workshop Special:

How to Use Your Video Eye: Express Yourself Through Videomaking

31 August 24, 2 pm

Berlin Art Week Special:

Performance:

Mean Time

with Amina Szecsödy

14 September 24

Screening

9 October 24, 8 pm

Public Guided Tours

Saturday, 6 July 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 7 July 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 27 July 24, 4 pm / in German



Sunday, 28 July 24, 4 pm / in English
Saturday, 17 August 24, 4 pm / in German
Sunday, 18 August 24, 4 pm / in English
Saturday, 21 September 24, 4 pm / in German
Sunday, 22 September 24, 4 pm / in English
Saturday, 12 October 24, 4 pm / in German
Sunday, 13 October 24, 4 pm / in English

Pia Arke

Arctic Hysteria

Curatorial text

KW, in collaboration with the 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 envelopes 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.

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 *Arctic Hysteria* at KW 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. The institution's first and second floor arranges a deconstructed architecture, critically unpacking Arke's apparatus of sightlines and her focus on the in-between. Taking its title from her influential, eponymous work series from 1996–97, 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.

Pia Arke, née Gant, was born in 1958 in Cape Tobin (now Uunarteq) near Scoresbysund (now Ittoqqortoormiit) on the Northeastern coast of Greenland. After spending her early years in Ittoqqortoormiit, Arke and her family moved around the country due to her father's occupation as a telegrapher. Between 1962–1987, Arke lived in Thule (now Dundas, Qaanaaq) in the North, in Narsaq in the South, and in Nuuk in the West, while spending intermittent periods at Danish boarding schools. In 1983, the artist changed her name to Arke, a subtle modification of Arqe, her mother's maiden name. After relocating to Copenhagen, she enrolled at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts to study painting and photography in 1987.

Curious about the politics and colonial power structures inherent in the camera and its image-making, Arke hand-built a camera house—a camera obscura tailored to her specific dimensions—in 1990 with the prospect of transporting it to the places of her childhood homes in Greenland and Denmark. She managed once to ship it to Nuugaarsuuk Point outside Narsaq, where she shot the iconic panorama that would become the signature backdrop of many of her performances and staged photographic layering, most notably in the key work *Self-Portrait* (1992).

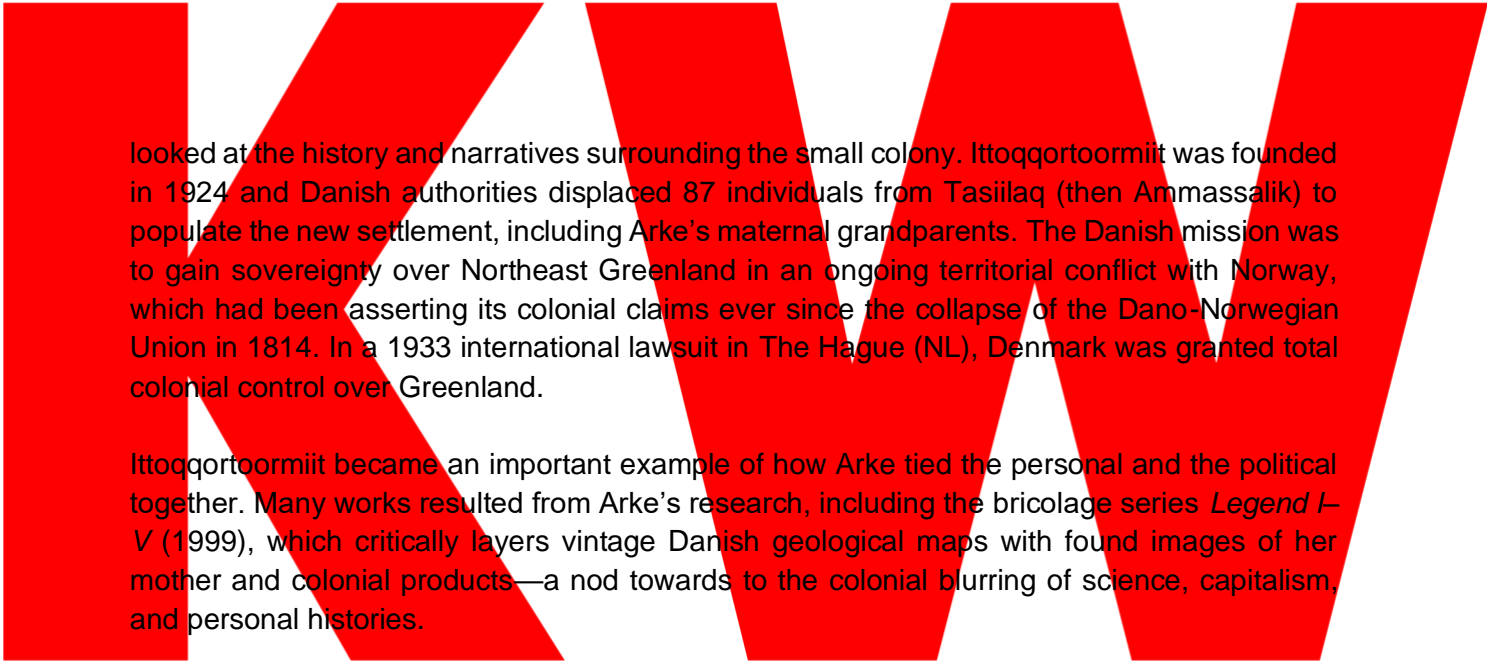
It was crucial for Arke to be able to go inside the apparatus and become a physical part of the image-making process; an act of reclaiming photography that had historically been a colonial archival technique employed by polar explorers. In her Copenhagen studio, she would perform in front of the large prints, taking on different roles as either a stoic statue posing with ethnographic objects in *The Three Graces* (1993), or as the disobedient colonial subject with a traditional Inuit boot on her head in *Untitled (Put your kamik on your head so everyone can see where you come from)* (1993).

The exhibition's first floor devotes itself to the performativity of the camera and the montaged human body, which were essential tools for Arke. The bodies in her works are mostly those of Inuit women, which, like Arke's, are both objects and subjects, carriers of colonial history in an active and a passive sense. During the research and production process, Arke consciously shifted between the roles of artist, ethnographer, and explorer, and reinserted these forgotten bodies and their silenced voices back into history.

Graduating from the Academy in 1995, Arke was based at the Department of Theory and Communication, where she published her thesis and seminal text *Ethnoæstetik* (Ethno-Aesthetics, 1995). Just as she reclaimed the camera using her own body, Arke also reappropriated the term 'ethno-aesthetics', which was previously used by Danish art historians to reference art from Greenland. In her self-described 'mongrel' state as Danish-Greenlandic, Arke sought to escape the binary logic of being either an ethnographic object or subject. She wanted to create a 'third place' to speak from and to fracture this Euromerican ethnocentric worldview; a position from which to deconstruct culturally essentialist thought—like in her video work, *Arctic Hysteria* (1996), in which Arke crawls naked across a print of the Nuugaarsuuk panorama before tearing it apart.

On a 1995 trip to the archive of The Explorers Club in New York, Arke came across a file labelled 'Pibloctoq – Arctic Hysteria' that contained a photograph of an Inuit woman being seized by White male explorers. She was refused permission to reproduce the image due to its sensitive nature. To Arke, the assault, the making of the photo, and its later censorship were all part of the same pattern of intergenerational colonial violence and the encounter became a pivotal moment in her practice. Not only did it speak to her photographic work of the female body as map and archive, but it also demonstrated the malleability of archives as narratives within the continuous control of paternal colonial structures, which, again, was of consequence to the female body. Arke then intensified her trawling of archives. The second floor of the exhibition traces this mapping process and the construction and deconstruction of colonial and personal archives.

In 1997, Arke returned to Ittoqqortoormiit for the first time in 35 years. A poignant experience, it was also the beginning of her most extensive and personal research work to date, which



looked at the history and narratives surrounding the small colony. Ittoqqortoormiit was founded in 1924 and Danish authorities displaced 87 individuals from Tasiilaq (then Ammassalik) to populate the new settlement, including Arke's maternal grandparents. The Danish mission was to gain sovereignty over Northeast Greenland in an ongoing territorial conflict with Norway, which had been asserting its colonial claims ever since the collapse of the Dano-Norwegian Union in 1814. In a 1933 international lawsuit in The Hague (NL), Denmark was granted total colonial control over Greenland.

Ittoqqortoormiit became an important example of how Arke tied the personal and the political together. Many works resulted from Arke's research, including the bricolage series *Legend I–V* (1999), which critically layers vintage Danish geological maps with found images of her mother and colonial products—a nod towards to the colonial blurring of science, capitalism, and personal histories.

Over the next years, Arke found lost family members in numerous visits to her birthplace. She would interview the town's other inhabitants, who had been silenced and forgotten, in order to unravel their past as well. Meticulously, she pieced together their personal stories, forming a patchwork of family relations, memories, and their silent gaps. Her extensive research resulted in the 2003 book *Scoresbysundhistorier: Fotografier, kolonisering og kortlægning* (*Stories from Scoresbysund: Photographs, Colonisation and Mapping*, published in English in 2010) and the collage-work *Dummy* (1997/2003). Made after the printing of the bound book, *Dummy* lays out its pages with Arke's notes and revisions, inviting the viewer into the process of writing and illustrating that 'in-progress' might be the only way to present the history of Ittoqqortoormiit—and that of Greenland itself. It remains incomplete but is simultaneously a constructed (hi)story. Arke's life was cut short in 2007 due to cancer.

While Arke's practice was born from the bind between Greenland and Denmark, it unfolds as a structural critique of how stories and identities are constructed. Likewise, it is a feminist critique centering on the narratives of Inuit women and the way they structurally negotiate identity across knowledge traditions and reveal the persistent colonial barriers forcing them into silence. These women become a form of communal resonance, marking the contrast between photos and histories made *about* Greenlandic Inuit and the photos and stories made *by* Greenlandic Inuit. Staging these narrative shifts, Arke reasserts the right to photography and with that, to self-portraiture and history.

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

Curator: Sofie Krogh Christensen

Academic Trainee and Curatorial Assistant: Aykon Süslü

Biography

Pia Arke (* 1958, GL – † 2007, DK) was a Danish-Greenlandic visual and performance artist, writer and photographer. Her works are held in numerous museums and private collections throughout Scandinavia, and have been the subject of major exhibitions, such as *Tupilakosaurus* curated by Kuratorisk Aktion in 2010, shown in Denmark, Greenland and Sweden, and *Pia Arke: Dream and Repression*, curated by Anders Kold at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk in 2021, touring to Kunstmuseum Brandts, Odense and Kunsten, Aalborg, Denmark. Major publications include *Tupilakosaurus – An Incomplete(able) Survey of Pia Arke's Artistic Work and Research*, published by Kuratorisk Aktion in 2012, and *Pia Arke*, published by Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.

Public Program

Open Studio

From person to self-portrait

7 July 24, 1–5 pm

Guided Tour for teachers

11 July 24, 4.30–6 pm

Holiday Workshop:

In the middle of Mitte – Exploring the city artistically

22–25 July 24, 11 am – 3 pm

Screening:

Sumé – The Sound of a Revolution

22 August 24, 9 pm

Long Night of Museums

at KW

24 August 24, 6 pm – 2 am

Focus Tour

6 September 24, 5 pm

Berlin Art Week Special

Performance:

SOIL

with Sarah Aviaja Hammeken

15 September 24, 2/4 pm



Workshop Special:

Experimenting with portraits and analogue photography

20 September 24

Workshop for children and young people

5 October 24, 1–4 pm

Public Tour with German Sign Language

6 October 24, 2 pm

Curator's Tour

with Sofie Krogh Christensen

10 October 24, 7 pm

Public Guided Tours

Saturday, 20 July 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 21 July 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 3 August 24, 4 pm / in English

Sunday, 4 August 24, 4 pm / in German

Saturday, 24 August 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 25 August 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 7 September 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 8 September 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 28 September 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 29 September 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 19 October 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 20 October 24, 4 pm / in English

Jimmy DeSana & Paul P.

Ruins of Rooms

Curatorial text

At times, I stare at myself in the mirror until I reach the point where I become estranged from my own image. Where I move away from the identity I was born with and that I am judged by. I analyze my bone structure, my eyes, my hair and my posture. I objectify myself to such a degree that life disappears, and death comes to the surface. Throughout my life, I have stared at death on several occasions, and when I told my mother I was gay she replied 'Please, don't get sick.' The French author and photographer Hervé Guibert once wrote "My body, due to the effects of lust or pain, has entered a state of theatricality, of climax, that I would like to reproduce in any matter possible: by photo, by video, by audio recording. It's a laboratory that I offer up as a performance...". He wrote this knowing his life was coming to an end due to HIV/AIDS. Guibert wrote about photography, particularly about the photographs that are *not* taken. He was interested in the psychology beyond the frame of an image.

"Jimmy was the ultimate voyeur. He lived through his camera," former boyfriend and gallerist Robert Stefanotti once said about Jimmy DeSana. Growing up in suburban Atlanta in a supposedly picture-perfect postwar family household, DeSana could not help but wonder what really went on behind those closed curtains. This interest increased when his parents got divorced after his father had cheated with the neighbor, which inspired *101 Nudes*, a series of photographs set amid the suburban landscape. DeSana had cast himself and friends in a series of black and white nude photographs that were, in his words, "without eroticism." "I think of the body almost as an object.", DeSana said to artist, collaborator and close friend Laurie Simmons. "I attempted to use the body but without the eroticism that some photographers use frequently. I think I de-eroticized a lot of it. Particularly in that period, but that is the way the suburbs are in a sense."

The body continued to be his primary subject and a space to stage and explore new possibilities when moving to New York City the following year. *101 Nudes* was quickly taken up by the thriving, eccentric, and queer local scene, particularly the mail art network led by Ray Johnson and his New York Correspondance School. Canada had a mail-art movement of its own with Image Bank in Vancouver and General Idea in Toronto, the latter of which published a gossip magazine called *File*. The cover of a 1974 spin-off called *Vile* was graced by a self-portrait of DeSana, hanging by a noose from a door frame—with a hard-on. This made DeSana an instant *File* icon after which he started to frequently collaborate with the magazine.

DeSana became a fixture in New York's punk and no-wave scene and the queer fetish subculture in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He established himself as a music photographer, taking early portraits of musicians like Yoko Ono, David Byrne, and Debbie Harry—like him, members of the city's avant-garde scene. His commercial work for venues like *East Village*

Eye, File, New York Rocker, SoHo Weekly News, and the Village Voice exhibited the same formal rigor and imagination as his art photography, which he showed at Stefanotti Gallery and Pat Hearn Gallery. Contracting HIV in the mid 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.

“Having been born in 1977, my self-awareness developed in relative lockstep with the awareness of an AIDS crisis. As with so many of my generation, I was left with an ingrained link between sex and death. Any acted-upon desire seemed a tacit agreement with fate. Daniel Reich (1973–2012), my New York art dealer, wrote on the occasion of our final exhibition together: ‘Very sadly, AIDS made for excellent television, as a cultish, sexual world exploded across dinettes and T.V. trays. . . . It was not illogical for viewers to conclude that to be gay was to be death-bound, and, in the view of one vociferous faction, to bear the distinction of the damned’.” These were the words found by artist Paul P. in the illuminating essay published for his exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada.

In his work, Paul P. surrounds himself with strangers, which he mostly represents in the form of portraits of young men whose identities and fates are unknown. The paintings and drawings ooze decadence, meticulously executed in 19th-century aesthetic modes. It’s like staring at an exquisite corpse—quite literally. Paul P. takes inspiration from the LGBTQ2+ archive in Toronto, the city where he is based. The many anonymous figures found in this archive come from gay erotic magazines, specifically, those produced between the beginning of gay liberation in the late 1960s and the advent of the AIDS crisis in the early 1980s, a period of provisional freedom. “I am interested in homosexuality as it existed in eras of criminalization and its stratagems. In my work, I pair the energy of the semi-outlaw gay pornographic industry of the mid-1970s with the defiant attitude of the dandy of the late 19th to early 20th centuries. By imposing the secretive visual language of the latter upon the overt sexual material of the former, my art brings together the implicit and the explicit—the irreconcilable and diverging aims of two historical methodologies—in representing homosexual desire in art”, he writes. Paul P. explores the tension between beauty and tragedy and between anonymity and acknowledgement. By refusing to reveal more than the first letter of his last name, Paul P. himself highlights and participates in the interchangeability and anonymity of identity. Through their aesthetic of seduction, his paintings compel us to *look*, so as not to overlook that these images are memorials of a time overshadowed by cultural tragedy, frozen in time.

In different ways, Paul and I are both emotionally and politically committed to creating visibility of the forgotten, the outlawed, and the queers that have suffered under political oppression and disregard. We met on a trip to New York, where I went to see Jimmy DeSana’s retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum, which I was negotiating to bring to KW. Paul was invited by P.P.O.W., the gallery that also represents the estates of David Wojnarowicz, Martin Wong, and Jimmy DeSana, among others, to research Wong’s drawings in relation to his own work. As I had just organized a Wong retrospective, I was curious to know more about Paul’s research and methodology, especially as he drew inspiration from the same generation of artists as I do. Through this encounter, I became increasingly fascinated by the idea of *looking* and *being looked at* and therefore invited Paul to collaborate with me on selecting work from Jimmy DeSana’s oeuvre in relationship to his own work. The resulting exhibition functions like a matryoshka doll, expanding our understanding of portraiture through an overlapping conversation between different generations. *Ruins of Rooms* is an ode to a lost generation and

the conclusion of my program at KW, through which I sought to advocate for the marginalized, the overlooked and the radical.

Sincerely yours,

Krist Gruijthuijsen

Biographies

Jimmy DeSana's (* 1949 – † 1990, USA) recent solo exhibitions include *Jimmy DeSana: Submission* at the Brooklyn Museum, New York, 2023, accompanied by a catalogue co-published by the Brooklyn Museum and DelMonico Books; *The Sodomite Invasion: Experimentation, Politics and Sexuality in the work of Jimmy DeSana and Marlon T. Riggs*, Griffin Art Projects, Vancouver, Canada, 2020; and *Remainders*, Pioneer Works, Brooklyn, NY, 2016. DeSana's work can be found in numerous public collections including the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Paul P. (* 1977, CA) has participated in numerous national and international exhibitions including X Museum, Beijing, China; Morena di Luna/Maureen Paley, Hove, UK; Museum of Modern Art, Queer Thoughts, Broadway 1602, New York; Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee; Lulu, Mexico City, Mexico; Cooper Cole, Power Plant, Toronto; Griffin Art Projects, Vancouver; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Oakville Galleries, Oakville; Maureen Paley, London; Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia; among others. He was included in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, New York, and the 2018 Front International Cleveland Triennial. Paul P.'s artwork can be found in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Modern Art New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Hammer Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Whitney Museum, among others. Paul P. lives and works in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Public Program

Open Studio

From person to self-portrait

7 July 24, 1–5 pm

Guided Tour for teachers

11 July 24, 4.30–6 pm

Lecture and conversation:

The catastrophe that has already happened

14 July 24, 4 pm



Holiday Workshop:

In the middle of Mitte – Exploring the city artistically

22–25 July 24, 11 am – 3 pm

Focus Tour

26 July 24, 5 pm

**Long Night of Museums
at KW**

24 August 24, 6 pm – 2 am

Curator's Tour

with Krist Gruijthuisen and Paul P.

7 September 24, 3 pm

Screening

18 October 24, 8 pm

Public Guided Tours

Saturday, 13 July 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 14 July 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 10 August 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 11 August 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 31 August 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 1 September 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 14 September 24, 4 pm / in German

Sunday, 15 September 24, 4 pm / in English

Saturday, 5 October 24, 4 pm / in English

Sunday, 6 October 24, 4 pm / in German

Education and Mediation

The KW Institute for Contemporary Art's Education and Teaching Program tackles topics and issues found in our art exhibitions and events. Working with children, teenagers, school classes, and adult visitors, we use a range of teaching techniques to deepen their understanding of art.

Long-term, thoughtfully considered Education and Teaching Projects are developed and implemented through our work with our collaborators. We value and action different repertoires of knowledge and experience by working with schools, youth centers, universities, Berlin-based initiatives, and other institutions in the capital. This is how we sustainably enable and support both collective and individual access to a range of topics and issues.

Mediation Program Summer 2024

Public Guided Tour on the history of KW:

KW, a hike

with Raoul Zöllner

21 July 24, 11 am

Insights into the archive of KW

KW, unboxed

with Raoul Zöllner

31 August 24, 11 am

Plain Language and Discovery Questions

Along with the Summer Program, exhibit content will be offered in plain language. The text can be accessed directly via the website or QR codes in the exhibition. We would like to reach all visitors with our program. For further inspiration, you will also find questions that can be used to discover the exhibition content in a playful way.

Accessibility

KW is located in a former margarine factory in Auguststraße, Berlin-Mitte. The building, which is designed as a four-sided courtyard, is protected as a historic monument and therefore only partially accessible for visitors with limited mobility. We would like to make the visit as smooth and barrier-free as possible for all visitors. To plan your visit with us, please write an email a week in advance to your visit to: mediation@kw-berlin.de or contact our staff via telephone: +49 30 243459-132. Please note that there may be a waiting time for visits without prior registration. You will find individual information on accessibility for our exhibitions and events on our website.

Dialogs with KW Guides

Monday-Friday during regular opening hours. Participation included in the exhibition ticket. Without prior registration. During the week, KW guides are present in the exhibitions during

regular opening hours. Visitors are invited to ask the guides questions, talk to them about the exhibitions and exchange perspectives.

Public guided tours at the weekend

Saturday-Sunday, at 4 pm. Participation included in the exhibition ticket. Registration on site. We recommend arriving in good time, as the number of participants is limited. In cooperation with Museumsdienst Berlin. Every Saturday and Sunday, experienced art educators guide visitors through the current exhibitions at KW. The tours take place every weekend in German and English. During a guided tour, only one of the parallel exhibitions is visited at a time, so that the guided tours change every week.

Upcoming 2024

BPA // Berlin program for artists exhibition

(Floor 1,2,3)

16 November 2024 – 5 January 2025

Curator: Linda Franken

General Information

Opening Hours

Wednesday – Monday 11 am – 7 pm

Thursday 11 am – 9 pm

Closed on Tuesday

Admission

10 € / reduced 6 €

Berlin Welcome Card holders 6 € / reduced 4,50 €

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Titles and exhibition dates are subject to change.