

친구

Danielle Dean, Emmanuel Louisnord Desir, Nikita Gale, Elle Pérez, P. Staff, Julie Tolentino, Pigpen, & Christelle de Castro, Carrie Yamaoka, Anicka Yi

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친구 implies a familiarity, as well as a closeness in age. The designation, though casual in nature, is not immediate. “친구” marks the third collaboration between 47 Canal and Commonwealth and Council and our current 친구-ship. Featuring gallery artists across both programs, this exhibition considers the sites of our entanglement. The works in this exhibition touch on how our interrelated existence and shared affinities cut across the grain, allowing the space for true kinship to grow.

With *UNTITLED* (2021), Julie Tolentino, Pigpen aka Stosh Fila, and Christelle de Castro conspire in a moment of intimacy amidst frenetic attempts to navigate the space between them. A still from Tolentino and Pigpen’s *.bury.me.fiercely* (2019) piece at Performance Space New York, the diptych captures Tolentino inserting hypodermic needles into Pigpen’s face, with a matching set already pinned in her own chin and eye socket. Bodies appearing to touch never do. Instead, their constituent particles come infinitesimally close without ever actually making contact—an ineffable affect captured by de Castro’s empathetic queer gaze. The needles enact both care and violence, probing a mutual condition of desiring.

If Tolentino, Pigpen, and de Castro chase refuge in nightlife, Carrie Yamaoka indexes presence, fighting and celebrating its ephemerality. Yamaoka’s *Untitled (disco ball #1–4)* (1990) is a series of transpositions, a vehicle of loss and change. Considering the Xerox machine as a type of camera, Yamaoka “rephotographed” an image of a disco ball, altering the copies with rusty rainwater, acrylic paint, and ink to create a column of unreliable children that function as afterimages colored by experience and (mis)rememberings. Without an original, what remains instead is the after-after-party: aging scraps of vellum preserved in a vitrine like erstwhile lepidoptera.

Danielle Dean’s current body of work investigates the nature of labor and its fungibility under racial capitalism, manipulating signifiers of pop culture—Disney animations, car commercials—to reveal the material and human losses elided in the carefully-constructed façade of global consumer culture. The lush, hand-painted composition of *6:28. a.m.* (2020) mimics a collage, with fragments of landscape cobbled from Lincoln and Ford adverts. Unpopulated, the amalgamation of road, desert, coast, and mountain appears to beckon rugged traversal towards a vacant bed, the location of so much online, work from home labor. Through emphasizing the vacant and sprawling landscape, Dean makes evident the acquisitive urge in automobile marketing that places the consumer’s body within the expanse. In figuring this engineered solipsism, Dean also highlights the erasure of labor and material extraction in narratives of consumption, reminding us of the human and ecological toll exacted in its wake.

Nikita Gale warps the material and form of public spaces in her series, *RUINERS*, creating steel armatures that evoke bannisters or barricades: structures that alternately congregate and divide people. Knotty ropes of common towels, pulled taut or looped in gravity-defying arcs fossilized in concrete at the apex of tension, tease an improbable tactility; they invite a confusion of motion, stasis, and tension. Gale manipulates the vernacular, soundproofing material into notations of sound, speech, and silence—punctuating, mitigating, and ultimately cloaking the clean straight lines of steel in a web of confounding texture and rhythm. Static reigns proud over the signal, or the reterritorialization of existing structures by forces both alien and familiar.

Emmanuel Louisnord Desir's sculptural works represent vessels as homes, bodies as vessels for the spirit, both modern and timeless, and the battles that occur between spirit and flesh through a commingling of disparate mediums. His assemblages oscillate between readymade interventions and expressive figuration, where the manipulation of wood and metal stands as reference for the societal manipulation of bodies as objects. Desir positions them in various states of uncomfortable repose, standing to attention. In his new work, *In Wickedness They trust* (2021) a serpentine form creates a base, covered in symbols of American money and culture. A stepped form, like a staircase, is jammed into this foundation, staging a violent tension. Resonating with Gale's use of common materials, Desir's works are often hand carved from ordinary pinewood, a material used in both contemporary domestic construction, and by ancient cultures over centuries. Here, the material is imbued with trans-temporal properties and layers of cultural signifiers.

The uncanny presence of Anicka Yi's *Nuit de Cellophane* (2014/2020) a plain wall studded with blank DVDs, call to mind turkey tail mushrooms found flourishing in the wild, extending a sense of spreading corruption. Splashes of honey draw sticky lines down the wall, pooling and stagnating at the foot. Like an echo or an estranged progeny, one almost expects to hallucinate Tolentino's prostrate form, with mouth open to receive the slow drip (as in Tolentino's performance *Honey*). The effect, however, is one of waste, of loss, of senselessness; viscid strands absent a receptacle. The snail trail of honey exerts both a suffocating and liberating effect—a blank vehicle for data corrupted by organic matter. Yet, embedded within is a sly humor in its incongruity, as if the collision or union between wall and disc triggered oozes of the sticky-sweet substance, the bee's media. Obsolescence is built into the Anthoplia data and technology as an apparatus of destruction and of pleasure that could exist without human intervention.

Where Yi's installation skirts around the body, P. Staff's *Piss Boys* (2021) acts as talisman and synecdoche. Gelatinous tiles of resin encase fluorescent yellow prints scattered throughout the gallery. Like an aposematic highlight, images of white cisgender men urinating into their own mouths are left with traces of various residues—hair, nail cuttings, ash, and gold flakes—organic and inorganic, witchy assemblages disrupt the solipsistic loop of self-pollution. Auxiliary to them are a set of similarly preserved images of gargoyles. Their gaping mouths act as receptacles, like an answer to Yi's slow drip, reversing their traditional function as waterspouts. Hollow, they wait to be filled.

In Elle Pérez's recent photographs images of landscapes and plants increasingly appear as references to both the body and its deeper interconnectedness, to each other and nature. Deep, dark shadowed forms, printed in luscious black and white, convey a certain electricity, an aliveness that is other than our own. The form of a palm leaf, mimics a hand, yet it is alien and otherworldly. Knife-pleated fronds arc toward the viewer, as if in greeting, or in a stabbing gesture. Pérez creates a network of slices and surfaces, a splayed ribcage of leaves. Pérez's works, similar to Yi's and Staff's, push us to view the world de-centered from humanity and consider spaces of slippage that are passed through by all life.

Danielle Dean (b.1982, Huntsville, Alabama, raised in London; lives and works in San Diego). Dean will have a solo exhibition at the Tate Britain in London this fall. Recent solo exhibitions include *Trigger Torque* (2020) at Ludwig Forum Aachen, Germany; *True Red Ruin* (2018) at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit; and *Focus* (2016) at the Studio Museum, New York. Her work was also include in *Freedom of Movement* (2018) at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and is in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco and Paris; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; CC Foundation Shanghai; and The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Emmanuel Louisnord Desir (b. 1997, Brooklyn, NY) lives and works in New York City. He received his BFA from The Cooper Union in 2019. He had his first solo show at 47 Canal in 2020.

Nikita Gale (b. 1983, Anchorage, Alaska; lives and works in Los Angeles) received an MFA from University of California, Los Angeles in 2016 and a BA from Yale University in 2006. Gale has had solo exhibitions at California African-American Museum, Los Angeles (2020); MoMA PS1, New York (2020); Visual Arts Center, University of Texas at Austin (2019).

Elle Pérez (b. 1989, Bronx, New York) lives and works in New York City. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Devotions* (2021), Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburg; *from sun to sun* (2019), Public Art Fund, New York; and *Diablo* (2018), MoMA PS1, New York. Pérez's work has been included in group exhibitions at the Renaissance Society, Chicago; Barbican Centre, London; Brooklyn Museum, New York; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. They are currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard University, and Dean at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture.

P. Staff (b. 1987, Bognor Regis, UK; lives and works in Los Angeles and London) studied at Goldsmiths College, London (2009), and was part of the Associate Artist Programme at LUX, London (2011). Staff has had solo exhibitions at Serpentine Galleries, London (2019); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2019); Dundee Contemporary Arts, Scotland (2019); LUMA Westbau, Zürich, Switzerland (2019); Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland (2017); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2017). They are the recipient of the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (2019); the Paul Hamlyn Award for Visual Artists (2015) as well as residencies at FD13 Residency for the Arts (2018), LUX (2014), The Showroom (2014), Fogo Island Arts (2012), and Banff Centre (2010). Staff's work is in the collections of Arts Council, UK; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Tate, London, UK.

Julie Tolentino, or JT, (b. 1964, San Francisco; lives and works in Joshua Tree) is a Filipina Salvadorean artist whose practice explores durational performance, movement, and sensual practices within installation environments as a way to explore the interstitial spaces of relationality, memory, race, gender, and the archive. Collaborative projects with artists including Stosh Fila, Aldo Hernandez, Abigail Severance, Mark So, and Robert Crouch extend into video, object- and scent-making, soundscapes, and texts drawn from the rich learning spaces of activism, advocacy, loss, and caregiving. Tolentino received an MFA in Experimental Choreography as a Deans Distinguished Fellow in 2020 at the University of California at Riverside. Recent performances and exhibitions include Performance Space New York, NY (2019); EFA Project Space, New York (2019); 6th Annual Thessaloniki Biennale, Thessaloniki, Greece (2018).

Stosh Fila aka Pigpen (performer) is a seasoned scenic artist who has worked in the commercial and film industry for over 30 years. Stosh has worked with Sade, Christina Aguilera, David Hockney, David LaChapelle, Linda Perry, Lionel Richie and many others. Pigpen was featured in many of Catherine Opie's projects, namely in the recent 2018 film and exhibition, *The Modernist* and has toured internationally in the live performance works of Julie Tolentino and Ron Athey & Co. Stosh Fila is the Senior Lead Scenic for RH.

Christelle de Castro is a commercial director, photographer & fine artist based in New York City. She is known for her iconic images of musicians, artists, and muses. Her love of portraiture and devotion to social justice sew a common thread in her personal & commercial work. She is also an adjunct professor for Parsons' MFA Design & Society department and co-founder of film production company, Ground Work, producing innovative music videos and fashion spots globally.

Carrie Yamaoka (b. 1957, Glen Cove, NY; lives and works in New York, NY) received a BA at Wesleyan University in 1979 and attended the Tyler School of Art, Rome, Italy from 1977-78. Recent solo exhibitions were held at Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles (2020); Ulterior Gallery, New York (2019); Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle (2019); and Lucien Terras, New York (2017). Yamaoka has

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been featured in group exhibitions at Ulterior Gallery, New York (2021); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2020); Transmitter, New York (2019); Albertz Benda, New York (2019); PARTICIPANT INC, New York (2019).

Anicka Yi (b. 1971 Seoul, South Korea) lives and works in New York City. Her recent solo exhibitions include Gladstone Gallery, Brussels; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Fridericianum, Kassel; Kunsthalle Basel; List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts; The Kitchen, New York; and The Cleveland Museum of Art. Yi's work was also featured in the 58th Venice Biennale, 2019. Yi has screened her film, *The Flavor Genome*, at the 2017 Whitney Biennial and the International Film Festival of Rotterdam, 2017. In 2016, she was awarded the Hugo Boss Prize for outstanding achievement in contemporary art.