O—Overgaden presents the exhibition *Psychopathia Sexualis* with art from the AIDS crisis to Ørstedsparken to initiate a new Danish LGBTQIA+ art history

With the exhibition *Psychopathia Sexualis* (August 13 – October 10), O—Overgaden brings the important political work on diversity, respect, and recognition into focus. The project's podcast collaboration, statement T-shirts, and exhibition of art, campaigns, activism, and cabaret from 1981 until today thematize the pathologization of sexualities, and initiate a new Danish LGBTQIA+ art history.

Exhibition title: *Psychopathia Sexualis*
Exhibition period: August 13 – October 10, 2021
Vernissage: Friday, August 13, from 3—10pm.
Location: O—Overgaden Institute for Contemporary Art
Link for press images: **https://bit.ly/3wHSPzR**

What is *Psychopathia Sexualis*?
The exhibition unfolds in Overgaden's columned hall and contains a selection of media and campaign material from the 1980s and 1990s, posters and objects from Bøssehuset ('The Gay House') at Christiania, and several artworks among which movement studies by Niels Nedergaard (1944–1987) play an important role.

Danish painter Maria Wæhrens has created a new wall painting for the exhibition and another wall is covered in posters by Kenyan-Canadian artist Brendan Fernandes, posing questions about PrEP, which, in pill form, works as a preventive treatment for HIV.

Also on display are Elmgreen & Dragset's work *Side Effects*, with glass urns containing the pastel-colored pigments used to manufacture modern HIV medications; the 1989 video work *Brown Spots* by Maria Thastum, addressing the shame associated with an AIDS diagnosis; a new sculptural work by Zoltan Ará; a drawing by Sidsel Meiniche Hansen made from methylene blue (an antiviral medication used in the treatment of HIV); and a performance in the magical public space of Ørstedsparken by Cassie Augusta Jørgensen.

Additionally, documentation from the performance collective DUNST is presented and an iconic work by Nicholas Maxim Endlicher connects the HIV/AIDS crisis with the pop-cultural emergence of the television station MTV in 1981.

Background of the exhibition, and a central question
The year 1981 plays a central part in the exhibition. In 2021 it is 40 years since homosexuality was removed from the list of psychiatric disorders in Denmark.* It has also been 40 years since the US Center for Disease Control (CDC) published an article in its weekly journal *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly* about a rare lung disease detected in five otherwise well, homosexual men in Los Angeles—what was later known as AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).

The exhibition project *Psychopathia Sexualis* takes these two historical events from 1981 as its starting points and examines the psychopathologization of gender, sex, and sexualities by asking the fundamental question: where is the Danish art history that deals with HIV and AIDS?

With this question, *Psychopathia Sexualis* directs specific attention toward the still globally ongoing HIV/AIDS pandemic and its marginalized stories, from media-Denmark to art-Denmark, from cabaret to activism.

*However, being transgender was not removed from the list of psychiatric disorders in Denmark until 2017.

T-shirt statement "HEN"
Han Kjøbenhavn x O—Overgaden
As part of the exhibition, O—Overgaden, Danish fashion brand Han Kjøbenhavn, and creative director Filip Samuel Berg from ©T-estimony have co-created a series of statement T-shirts. The T-shirt is explored as a historic testimony and a global medium of cultural activism through 11 different queer statements, and the fashion house HAN is renamed for the occasion to the gender-neutral pronoun HEN. The 11 T-shirts figure as works in the exhibition and can also be bought in a limited edition at Overgaden as well as in Han Kjøbenhavn's flagship store in Copenhagen.

What does the exhibition title *Psychopathia Sexualis* mean?
The exhibition hijacks its title from the 1886 book *Psychopathia Sexualis*, a landmark publication on psychopathology and sexuality written by Austrian psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902).

His book describes a wide range of "sexual perversions and deviations" and is known to be one of the earliest works on the notion of "homosexuality." Among other things, it concludes that most homosexuals suffer from a psychological disease caused by a degenerated brain. Krafft-Ebing also coined the expressions "sadism" and "masochism" in this book, which had a substantial impact on the continental European forensic and psychiatric apparatus in the first half of the 20th century.

Podcast on the HIV/AIDS crisis in Denmark
As part of the exhibition, a podcast series is released in collaboration with The Lake Radio, unfolding an array of the exhibition's perspectives and taking a look at medical-historical and art-historical aspects of HIV and AIDS in a Danish and Nordic context. The podcast is produced by Jan Høegh Stricker and Kasper Vang in collaboration with Mathias Kryger and O—Overgaden.

Participating artists in *Psychopathia Sexualis*
Zoltan Ará, Filip Berg, Karim Boumjimar, Elmgreen & Dragset, Nicolas Maxim Endlicher, Brendan Fernandes, Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld, Cassie Augusta Jørgensen, Carlos Motta, Niels Nedergaard, Maria Thastum, Maria Wæhrens and others.

The exhibition is curated by Mathias Kryger in collaboration with O—Overgaden. Mathias Kryger is an art critic at Danish newspaper *Politiken* and has hosted several TV shows about art on DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation). He has, among other things, curated the exhibitions *William Forsythe in the Company of Others* and *Ovartaci & the Art of Madness* at Kunsthal Charlottenborg.

Further information about the exhibition project can be acquired through O—Overgaden's Head of Press Line Brædder, lb@overgaden.org / phone: +45 2782 3929 or curator Mathias Kryger, mathiaskryger@gmail.com / phone: +45 2280 3253.

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