

Tanya Leighton

Press Release

Sam Anderson
'LUNCH HOUR'
Tanya Leighton, Los Angeles
4654 W Washington Blvd
Los Angeles

13 July – 13 August 2022

Preview: Saturday 9 July, 5–8pm

Tanya Leighton is pleased to announce Sam Anderson's 'Lunch Hour', featuring new sculptures by the New York-based artist. By employing permutations of stock characters, Anderson's exhibition explores narratives of desire, particularly in their unrequited form. The title 'Lunch Hour' is an explicit reference to such a story, a 1960's kitchen-sink film by the same title. It follows a male mid-level executive's ill-fated attempts to consummate an adulterous, workplace romance with his female subordinate, with whom he can never find a moment alone because his only time away from family and coworkers is the lunch hour. Anderson's exhibition is full of subtle references to figures frustrated by desire, such as Penelope the cat from 'Pepé Le Pew' or the Big O from Shel Silverstein's widely influential 'The Missing Piece'. Not subtle, however, is the artist's choice to recast these references as various animal skulls.

Skulls have been a recurring interest throughout Anderson's career, but in 'Lunch Hour' they take on a more central role than in the artist's past exhibitions. As assemblages, Anderson's skulls gesture toward existential unease. Perched on pedestals, windows, and balconies, each sculpture implies a tableau ripped from a familiar film. In her own words, the artist explains the skulls as stand-ins for archetypes: "Replacing protagonists with representations of skulls, [my] sculptures suggest that narrative exists as desire itself. They hold the place of archetypal lovers that circulate culture, such as the entwined couple, the reluctant object of obsession, and the insatiable serial monogamist."

A character archetype is a figure whose internal conflict is readymade, such as the lovelorn loner, the redeemed addict, or the grumpy luddite. If Anderson's archetypal characters are explicit, then her move to recast them as skulls suggests an attempt to complicate how we project onto them. Moreover, if the artist created skulls to raise a conversation about how people long for others and therefore imagine their inner lives, then it is worth recalling that a dead thing can certainly not reciprocate that desire. 'Lunch Hour' presents archetypal characters as dead subjects; here, desire and narrative are reduced to a common denominator with absence as their shared multiple.

Sam Anderson (born 1982 in Los Angeles, California) lives and works in New York. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include 'I Never Loved Your Mind' at Tanya Leighton, Berlin in 2020; 'Contemporary Sculpture: Sam Anderson & Michael Dean' at Boca Raton Museum of Art, Florida in 2019; 'A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing' at Chapter NY, New York in 2018, and 'Big Bird' at Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne in 2017. A monograph of Anderson's work was published by Mousse on the occa-

sions of her solo exhibitions at Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne and Sculpture Center, New York.

The gallery is located at 4654 W Washington Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90016. Open hours are Wednesday to Saturday, 11am – 6pm and by appointment. For images or information, please email info@tanyaleighton.com