

DEAN SAMESHIMA*Being Alone*

February 1 - March 18, 2023

Queer Thoughts presents *Being Alone*, a solo exhibition of new work by Dean Sameshima. For the exhibition the artist continues his long-standing project documenting queer spaces, having previously depicted sites of queer interaction on the periphery of urban landscapes. For this new series of black and white photographs, also titled *Being Alone* (2022), the artist eschews an earlier focus on the physical characteristics of such spaces, rendering instead the human conditions that require and shape their existence. As a documentarian, Sameshima takes as his subject the anonymous encounter itself, investigating its psychological, political and spiritual dimensions, and paradoxically linking spaces for anonymous sex with the existential condition of human solitude.

The photographs in *Being Alone* document porn theaters in Berlin, but are not about porn or the act of sex. Sameshima empties the screen of its explicit details, presenting the afterglow of smut images as an open-ended receptacle for imagined desire, a fantasy space evading the societal confines of restricted identity. Constructed for an anonymous being-together, the porn theater projects an escape hatch from everyday reality and the fixed self. Losing oneself in a film is a built-in feature of our society of control, and venues for anonymous sex mitigate the unaccounted-for remainder of the sexual margins. For many individuals who frequent porn theaters, the experience of conflicting cultural realities (namely their clandestine sexual practices) perpetuate personal struggles to establish a cohesive identity. In the anonymous space of the porn theater, these marginal men exist (at least momentarily) without fear of judgement, shame or persecution.

In Sameshima's images, the specificity of pornographic material is erased from an indelible screen, leaving only a monolithic transference of light, which evokes the evacuated pictorialism of Tony Conrad's *Yellow Movies* (1973). Similar to those works, which sought to exceed the duration of a 'film' past a single human's perception, Sameshima's hollowed screens are composed of multifold viewers' subjectivities, and the countless anonymous gazes of a solitary individual.

Dean Sameshima has been exploring the medium of photography for 30 years. This will be his first exhibition with Queer Thoughts, and his first solo exhibition in New York City.

A second series of works, *Figures of lust furtively encountered in the night* (2001, printed 2023) will be exhibited in Queer Thoughts' office.

DEAN SAMESHIMA (b. 1971, Torrance, CA) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Recent group exhibitions include MOCA, Los Angeles; Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle; Museu de Arte, São Paulo; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include, Peres Projects, Berlin; and GAVLAK, Los Angeles. Sameshima is in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, and was the 2022 recipient of The Artist Acquisition Club award.

DEAN SAMESHIMA – *Being Alone*

11.9.22 – 12.17.22

1. *Being Alone (No. 20)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
2. *Being Alone (No. 24)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
3. *Being Alone (No. 1)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
4. *Being Alone (No. 8)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
5. *Being Alone (No. 5)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
6. *Being Alone (No. 4)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
7. *Being Alone (No. 9)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
8. *Being Alone (No. 13)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
9. *Being Alone (No. 14)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
10. *Being Alone (No. 22)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
11. *Being Alone (No. 17)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
12. *Being Alone (No. 18)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
13. *Being Alone (No. 15)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
14. *Being Alone (No. 3)*, 2022
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)

Office:

15. *Figures of Lust Furtively Encountered in the Night (No. 20)*, 2001
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
16. *Figures of Lust Furtively Encountered in the Night (No. 6)*, 2001
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)
17. *Figures of Lust Furtively Encountered in the Night (No. 8)*, 2001
Archival inkjet print
23.4h x 16.5w inches (59.5h x 42w cm)