

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Press release

Jordan Strafer

LOOPHOLE

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Grafisches Kabinett

Preview for the press: Thursday, February 16, 2023, 10 a.m.

Opening: Thursday, February 16, 2023, 7 p.m.

New York-based artist Jordan Strafer's primary medium is video. Her part-autobiographical, part-fictitious work reflects the complex nature of racial identity, gender, sexuality, class, and 'Americanism.' A key aspect of her practice is the thoughtful yet playful choreography of seemingly antagonistic emotions—both comical and tragic, intimate and factual, familiar and unfamiliar, repulsive and appealing situations appear in an unusually fluid manner. Drawing from true stories, she makes visible that realities are rarely dualistic.

In recent works, the artist less often appears as a performer herself. Make-up, scenery and props play independent roles alongside the protagonists. The recurrent use of stylistic devices such as homemade dolls, masks, face painting, miniature representations, or dummies emphasizes the scene's artificial nature. Situations that often seem absurd redirect the focus from the plot to our own way of seeing and—through their clearly staged and alienated form—allow a critical stance towards a society defined by questionable moral ideas and injustice.

For her exhibition *LOOPHOLE* at the Secession, the artist has produced an eponymous new short film that deals with a romantic affair between a defense attorney and a juror amid a nationally publicized rape trial in Florida in the 1990s. Rather than merely reenacting the trial, the film focuses on the affair as a potential loophole in the justice system. Strafer depicts the loss of any structure and order and exposes the abuse of power, greed, and corruption that underlay the act of sexual violence. The film references the genre of the erotic thriller, which was popular at the time, and juxtaposes the deeply ambivalent feelings of fear and desire.

Beyond Strafer's reference to Hollywood movies from the 80s and 90s and the use of transcripts of the court case, *LOOPHOLE* is set against the backdrop of her personal involvement. "I'm the fan, and the subject is my mom," Strafer states in an interview with Aram Moshayedi on why she calls her work fanfiction. Strafer's mother appears as the defense attorney's assistant and the character 'The Pen' is

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

supposed to be her. However, rather than simply including her as biographical detail, Strafers stresses the importance of involving real life and the specific as a source of the universal.

Strafer punctuates her plot with details taken from both fictional and actual material sources, not allowing us to clearly distinguish which one we are facing: her mother eating during a break, the sound of chewing clearly audible; her blue skirt suit with silk blouse chosen as a replica of the outfit she actually wore during the trial; the piece of toilet paper placed on a razor cut on the neck of the accused; the blurred face of the accuser, just how we may expect it in a documentary movie; a pantyhose handed over from one jury member to another; not to forget the facial modifications with silicone prosthetics usually invisible, now so obvious they almost become agents within their own right.

Strafer switches seamlessly between events that one would expect to see, that unquestionably belong on the screen, and those that the camera seems to have caught only by accident. Exploring the relationships between archetypical characters and employing aesthetics resembling soap opera television, however, opposed by almost arbitrary moments, Strafer leaves the audience in an oscillating space of necessary interpretation. She spares the audience neither from emotional nor from rational experience. Unable to define if one feels fine or awkward, reasonable or irrational, ambivalence takes over instead and before everything falters; the audience is left to solve their own moral and ethical dilemma.

Jordan Strafer was born in Miami in 1990. She lives and works in New York.

Programmed by the board of the Secession
Curated by Christian Lübbert

A cooperation between Secession, Vienna; Index—The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm; and KINDL—Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin.

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Publication

Jordan Strafer. LOOPHOLE

Format: 29,7 x 21 cm

Details: Softcover, dustjacket, 80 pages

Series design concept: Sabo Day

Graphic design: Sabo Day

Texts: Constance Debré (essay), Kerstin Stakemeier (essay), Aram Moshayedi (conversation)

Languages: German, English, French (essay Constance Debré)

100 images

Secession 2023

Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König, Köln

ISBN 978-3-7533-0420-5

EUR 18,00

Intervention by the artist: Jordan Strafer developed a movie poster for her work on display. It is the basis for the custom-made dust cover for this book and a limited edition of 500 posters to be sold and placed throughout the city at the time of the exhibition.

The New York-based artist Jordan Strafer's primary medium is video. Her part-autobiographical, part-fictional work reflects the complex nature of racial identity, gender, sexuality, class, and 'Americanism.' A key aspect of her practice is the thoughtful yet playful choreography of seemingly antagonistic emotions.

The publication accompanying Strafer's exhibition *LOOPHOLE* at the Secession offers insight into her eponymous new film and her creative process. It contains essays by **Constance Debré** and **Kerstin Stakemeier** and an interview by **Aram Moshayedi** with Strafer herself. Strafer developed an artistic intervention for the book in the form of a movie poster based on her work on display. As an artistic intervention for the book, Strafer developed a movie poster based on her work on display. The result is a custom-made dust cover for this book and a limited edition of 500 posters.

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Current exhibitions

Hauptraum

Christine Sun Kim *Cues on Point*

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Galerie

Kresiah Mukwazhi *Kirawa*

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Grafisches Kabinett

Jordan Strafer *LOOPHOLE*

February 17 – April 16, 2023

Publications

Christine Sun Kim. DRAW A BLANK – BLANK ZIEHEN

Softcover, dustjacket, 144 pages, EUR 24,00

Kresiah Mukwazhi

Softcover, dustjacket, 80 pages, EUR 18,00

Jordan Strafer. LOOPHOLE

Softcover, dustjacket, 80 pages, EUR 18,00

Permanent presentation

Gustav Klimt, *Beethoven Frieze*

Beethoven – Painting and Music in cooperation with
Wiener Symphoniker

Opening hours

Tuesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Admission

Regular € 12,00 | Students under 26 € 7,50

Seniors 65+ € 10,00 | Free admission for children under 12

Press contact Secession

Julia Kronberger

T. +43 1 587 53 07-10, julia.kronberger@secession.at

Press images

download at <https://secession.at/presse>

Main Sponsor

ERSTE 

Public funding and supporters:

 Bundesministerium
Kunst, Kultur,
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport

 **Stadt
Wien** | Kultur

freunde
der
secession

Cooperation-, media partners, sponsors:

MAX BROWN
HOTELS



 **Bildrecht**

 **Schlemser**
echt Waldviertel

VÖSLAUER

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Jordan Strafer

Biografie | Biography

Jordan Strafer wurde 1990 in Miami geboren. Sie lebt und arbeitet in New York.
Jordan Strafer was born in Miami in 1990. She lives and works in New York.

Einzelausstellungen und Screenings (Auswahl) | Solo exhibitions and screenings (selection)

- 2024 Renaissance Society
Hot Wheels, Athens, Greece
- 2023 Company, New York, NY
Heidi, Berlin, Germany
CAMH Houston, Texas, USA
KINDL, Berlin, Germany
Index, Stockholm, Sweden
LOOPHOLE, Secession, Vienna, Austria
- 2022 SOOEY Solo Exhibition, Red Tracy, Copenhagen, Denmark
PUNCHLINE Solo exhibition, Participant Inc, New York, NY
PUNCHLINE Solo exhibition, Home Gallery in collaboration with Participant Inc, New York, NY
PEAK HEAVEN LOVE FOREVER Renaissance TV, tv.renaissancesociety.org

Gruppenausstellungen und Screenings (Auswahl) | Group exhibitions and screenings (selection)

- 2022 Memory of Rib, N/A Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
Abrons Arts Center, New York, NY
Currents New York Film Festival, New York, NY
- 2021 Illiberal Arts September 2021 at Haus der Welt, Berlin, Germany, curated by Kerstin Stakemeier and Anselm Franke
This End The Sun with Maryam Hoseini and Rindon Johnson at New Museum, New York, NY, curated by Margot Norton
PEP (Process Entanglement Procedure), Acid Rain, Chapel Hill, NC, curated by Jerstin Crosby
- 2020 No Bag, Presented by Participant Inc, participantafterdark.art
Company (BASF), Red Tracy, Copenhagen, Denmark, curated by Line Ebert
Hard Opening, Housing, New York, NY, curated by KJ Freeman
Cinema Quarantine, cinemaquarantine.org, curated by Coco Young
Might Delete Later, Essex Flowers, New York, NY
When Truth Kills Truth Focus Group with Phoebe Osborne February 20, SculptureCenter, Long Island City, NY
In Practice Total Disbelief, SculptureCenter, Long Island City, NY, curated by Kyle Dancewicz
STEPPENWOLF, 182 Avenue C, New York, NY
- 2019 Red Eye Focus Group organized in collaboration with Phoebe Osborne, Hercules Art, New York, NY
Say Ever Moves Bard MFA Thesis Show Red Hook, NY, curated by Marisa Espe
Studio 54 Film Program: Screening, Films Selected by Rindon Johnson Julia Stoschek Collection
Dusseldorf, Germany
Cindy Crawford Birthday Bash: Short Film & Video Survey 182 Avenue C, New York City, NY, organized by Miles Pflanz
- 2018 Lardesss: Bard Second Year Show Bard Fisher Studio Arts, Annandale on Hudson, NY
A Cultivated Life, two-person show with Rindon Johnson, King's Leap Projects, Brooklyn, NY, curated by Coco Fitterman

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Jordan Strafer

List of Works

Mom (Holly), 2023

Reflective beads, ballpoint pen, glue, onionskin paper
27,9 × 21,6 cm (without frame)

Big Mom, 2023

Glass, glue, coffee, inkjetprint, onionskin paper
83,2 × 63,5 cm (without frame)

Talk Show Set, 2023

Wood, plexiglass, plastic, metal, fabric, resin
22 × 45,5 × 20 cm

LOOPHOLE, 2023

2K video, color, sound
24 min 40 sec

LOOPHOLE CREDITS

Written and Directed by

Jordan Strafer

Executive Producers

Karen Hillenburg
Sigurjón Sighvatsson
Marguerite Steed Hoffman
Seth Stolbun

Produced by

Aram Moshayedi
Amy Poncher
Cara Scott
Dustin Grant

CAST

Jim Fletcher
Tara Subkoff
Emily Davis
Emily Allan
Kevin Clay
Olivia Erlanger
Kristin Samuelson
Sophia Cleary
Joy Decker
Tetyana Zakharova
Rika Akinshi
Gina Ardani
James Brickhouse
Charles Vitale
Gary Indiana

ADDITIONAL CREW

Director of Photography

Carl Knight

Production Designer

Eric Finn Hersey

Costume Designer

Zach Poncher

Costume Assistant

Souren Nazarian

Hair and Makeup Artist

Chelsea Gehr

Prosthetics

Gryphyn

HMU Assistant

Julian Stoller

Casting

Casting Double (Geraldine Baron, Salome Oggenfuss)

Art Department

Ryann Snook
Alexa Harrington
Luis Seda Carpenter
Lucas Bond
Chris Carlson

Courtroom Artwork

Dante Hussein

Set Production Assistant / AD PA

Syd Walsh

Set Production Assistant / Driver

Marques Johns

Set Production Assistant

Akeil Sandy

Movement Direction

Phoebe Osborne

Assistant to the Director

Dante Hussein

BTS

Larry Bovic

Production Manager

Lindsey Gardner

First Assistant Director

Gerardo Coello

B Cam Operator

Alejandro Cortes

First Assistant Camera

Godfred Sedano

Second Assistant Camera / DIT

Sandy Ismail

Second Assistant Camera / DIT

Daniel Luis Ennab

Camera Trainee

Angel Cortes

Gaffer

David Alexander

Best Electric

Jessenia Zambrano

Francis Hernandez

Key Grip

David Djaco

Best Grip

Adam M. Tuller

Production Sound Mixer

Ian Berman

Covid Compliance Officer

Brianna Tew

Editor

Alan Martín Segal and Jordan Strafer

Color

Company3

VFX and Title Animation

Alan Martín Segal

Music and Sound Design

Wibke Tiarks

Sound Mix

Aron Sanchez

SPECIAL THANKS

Talya Krupnick
Matthew Li
Isabel Mallet
Maryam Hoseini
Rin Johnson
Sabo Day
Rosen Eveleigh
Tina Lipsky
Christian Lübbert

The film was commissioned by Secession, Vienna and co-produced by Index – The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm and KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin where the film will be shown subsequently.

LOOPHOLE TRANSCRIPT

Suspenseful music starts playing as the defense lawyer winks at a member of the jury and plays through the title card

SARA: She kept repeating over and over again about her shoes 'where are my shoes?' And to comfort her I went inside the house to find her shoes...

RAY: Your friend tells you she was raped. Is that right?

S: Yes.

R: What she tells you is that she wants her shoes. Is that correct?

S: Yes.

R: Several times. She was worried about her shoes.

S: Yes.

R: So you went into the house.

S: Yes.

R: Into the house where the rapist is, right?

S: I guess you could say that, yes.

R: It's dark in there?

S: Yes.

R: You go through the kitchen, right?

S: Yes.

R: Into this little hallway.

S: Yes.

R: It's dark in this hallway, isn't it.

S: Right.

R: You meet up with this man who your friend says is a rapist isn't that right.

S: I was not afraid of him no I wasn't afraid-

R: That's not my question, Miss, you understand my question? My question is did you meet this man who your friend says is the alleged rapist?

S: Yes.

R: In this dark hallway is that right.

S: Yes.

R: And you ask him to help him- help- you ask the rapist to help you find her shoes, is that correct?

S: Yes.

R: And he turns around and goes with you uh, out of the house is that right?

S: Yes.

R: Through the dining room to begin with, is that correct?

S: Yes.

R: It's dark in that house, right?

S: Yes.

R: You're walking through the dining room with this man, is that correct?

S: Yes?

R: The man who's allegedly a rapist right?

S: Yes.

R: You go out the door don'chu? Into a little patio area.

S: Correct.

R: With this man who's the alleged rapist is that right.

S: That's right.

R: You go out past the patio and onto the lawn isn't that right?

S: Right.

A single tone plays as the overhead image of the beach is presented

R: You go across the lawn with him is that right.

S: Yes.

R: Towards the beach.

S: Yes.

R: As you go across the lawn you get to an area where there are hedges? and uh concrete wall isn't that right?

A few bright mysterious tones play as the jury watches the trial

S: Yes.

R: And you're still with this man who's the alleged rapist, is that right.

S: Yes.

R: You get to a dark stairway isn't that correct.

S: Mm' Yes.

R: There are no lights in that stairway, is there?

S: No.

R: You go down the stairway right.

S: Right.

R: With this man.

S: Right.

R: There's a door down at the bottom of the stairway is that right.

S: Right.

R: You and this man who's the alleged rapist go out the door, is that correct?

S: [*Impatiently*] Right.

R: Out onto the beach.

S: Right.

R: And you then spend uh several minutes looking for these shoes with this man who's the alleged rapist? Is that right?

S: Right.

R: Then after awhile you say, "well let's forget about looking for the shoes and let's go back."

S: Right.

R: Is that correct?

S: Right.

R: You and he go toward the door, is that right.

S: Right.

R: You entered that doorway.

S: Right.

R: It's a dark stairwell.

S: Right.

R: In fact you even told us today he's behind you is that right.

S: Right.

R: Going up these stairs this man who is alleged to be a rapist is behind you in this dark stairway, is that correct?

S: Right.

R: The two of you go up the stairway, isn't that right?

S: Right.

R: You get to the top and you start going across the lawn, isn't that correct?

S: Right.

R: And you go into the house with him.

S: Yes.

R: And you go into this hall (where) down- towards the kitchen again is that right.

S: Yes.

R: Where you meet up with your friends.

S: Yes.

R: Now there's one thing you forgot to tell us in that, uh, scenario on direct examination, what you said to this man who's the alleged rapist when you left? You forgot about that didn'tchu?

S: I wasn't asked that sir.

R: Didn't you tell him you were sorry?

S: No I did not.

R: OH-didn't you tell him uh Miss that you were sorry that you had to meet under these circumstances?

An alert melody plays over a shot of Juror #5

S: AH I used those words -

R: I didn't ask you WHY you used them I said did you say YOU WERE SORRY YOU HAD MET HIM UNDER THOSE circumstances.

S: I did not mean I was- I was sorry!

R: I didn't ask you what you mean.

PA: Objection, she's not being allowed to answer the question!

J: Overruled. Please answer the question.

R: The question is, did you say to this man "I'm sorry we met under these circumstances."

S: Yes I said that.

R: To the man who's supposedly the rapist, is that right.

S: Yes.

R: The man who raped your friend right.

S: Yes.

R: Your friend who you say is hysterical right.

S: [*Flustered*] Yes.

R: You said I'm sorry we met under these circumstances.

S: What I said and how I said it-

R: (Nope-) Did you say I'm sorry we met under these circumstances?

PA: Objection, argumentative, she's not being allowed to answer the question.

J: Overruled.

R: Is that what you said?

A short depressing melody plays

S: Yes.

The sound of a chattering crowd and a variety of cameras clicking

MICHAEL: I know I'm the one who's been charged and I'm the one on trial, but I. It's difficult sometimes not to feel like my family is on trial for me and that in some strange way that I am on trial for my family

Another voice:

That's what an innocent man would say

—

RAY: I think it's important that you look a little bit better than I do [*Chuckles, slurps Cuban coffee*]

Lets ah... I'll try to make sure that ah... we have no animosity towards anyone, but we may have animosity towards some ideas, only. [*Slurps Cuban coffee*]

M: That's not- That's not enough

R: Listen, I mean. It could go either way, but it's gonna go our way.

M: Right.

R: But it could go either way.

M: Yeah

R: Right?

M: Yeah, I was gonna say. It better not go the other way.

R: I mean, listen, if it was up to me... It is.

—

RAY: Concrete wall, stairwell, door, beach. Door, stairwell, lawn, house, hallway, kitchen, house, kitchen.

—

THE PEN: Did. you. Have them. On. while. You. were. Standing.
On.

*Music with a heavy beat plays over a television intro sequence
interrupting her sentence*

The beach? It had. To be. For. Some other. Reason. That you
took. Them off.

*A dark ambient swelling sound grows as the scene transitions
and ends with the jury inspecting the evidence*

RAY: (Mumbling)... Do we need to take a recess? No?

R: Did you have your pantyhose on when you drove your car from
Au-Bar?

HOLLY: Yes.

R: Did you have your pantyhose on when you got to the parking
lot at the Kennedy home?

H: Yes.

R: Did you have your pantyhose on when you got out of your
car?

H: Uh. I'm not sure.

R: Did you have your pantyhose on when you went into the
house?

H: I'm not sure.

R: Did you have them on while you were standing on the beach?

H: I don't remember.

R: Isn't it uh, true Miss that you took your pantyhose off in
the car?

H: No, I don't remember.

R: You told us yesterday that you weren't invited to go on the
beach until you were in the kitchen, right?

H: Yes.

R: So you didn't take the pantyhose off in the car because you
thought you were going on the beach?

H: I don't know when I took the pantyhose off.

R: Well, It had to be for some other reason. That you took
them off.

H: I don't know.

R: When you drove home you still had the same panties on?

H: Yes sir (clears throat) I'm sorry -

R: (Whispering) Just let it settle down... See what they say...

Suspenseful music begins

RAY's voice : We know this woman has had a difficult life, that she's disturbed, and we are only wishing the best for her and that she'd straighten herself out. We're praying for her.

A fly buzzes, a downtempo melody

LISA: When I was a kid, I liked to steal strawberries. I'd sneak into the neighbor's yard at the end of the street. And I remember they had this big fence. I'd always scrape my knees climbing over it. On the other side, they had these wild rose bushes. And the thorns would dig into my legs and cut my thighs as I slid down. But, the strawberries always tasted so sweet.

RAY: Because of how much it hurt to get them?

Whistling over RAY's groaning and THE PEN biting her nails

A moody melody plays over the courtroom

MICHAEL, singing:

The summer wind came blowin' in

From across the sea

It lingered there to touch your hair

And walk with me

All summer long, we sang a song

And we strolled that golden sand

Two sweethearts

And the summer wind

Like painted kites

Those days and nights,

they went flyin' by

The world was new

*Beneath the blue umbrella sky
Then softer than a piper man
One day, it called to you
And I lost you, I lost you
To the summer wind
Mmm,mmm, the summer wind
The autumn wind and the winter winds
They have come and gone
And still the days, those lonely days
They go on and on
But guess who sighs his lullabies
Through nights that never end
My fickle friend, the summer wind
Mmmmmm, The summer wind.
The summer wind came blowin' in
From across the sea
It lingered there to touch your hair
And walked with me
All summer long, we sang a song
And we then we strolled
that golden sand
Two sweethearts
And the summer wind.
The summer wind came blowin' in
From across the sea*

*It lingered there to touch your hair
And walked with me
All summer long, we sang a song
And we then we strolled
that golden sand
Two sweethearts
And the summer wind...*