

Press Release

Win McCarthy

Innenportrait

Berlin, 31 January 2023

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Innenportrait

25 February – 14 May 2023

Curator: Krist Gruijthuisen

Assistant Curator: Léon Kruijswijk

Curatorial Assistant: Linda Franken

With *Innenportrait*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art presents the first institutional solo exhibition of Win McCarthy (b. 1986, US). In his practice, McCarthy explores the subjective understanding of his surroundings through reflections on a built environment. His works are often inhabited by personal and confessional ephemera that question the notion of intimacy. McCarthy works in various modes and media, in which the physiological act of seeing and experiencing daily life is filtered through forms of self-portraiture, underlining the hollowness and estrangement felt within a colorless and atomized metropolis.

The exhibition *Innenportrait* is composed entirely of new work, which focuses on the collision between opticality and intellect and evokes ideas around embodiment, perception, and remembrance. Sculptures made of conjoined prescription eyeglasses populate the rooms of the exhibition. They are the disembodied prostheses of collective vision, straining for clarity. Juxtaposed is a large series of photograms, which depict scenes both personal and universal: domestic interiors, cityscapes, a dog, the birth of a child. All are subtly distorted, either by hand or through collage, in order to further ideas around commonality and individuality.

Finally, various simple, provisional sculptures are installed in front of arrays of photographic lights. These works anticipate their own documentation and accept the primacy of the photograph. By making the photography equipment visible, McCarthy addresses the issue of how art and life are observed, documented, and proliferated. The unequivocal indirectness of one's ever-shifting relationship to the subject matter is made palpable.

If subjectivity has been pivotal in McCarthy's previous work, this new body of work presents a vision of contemporary subjective experience in disarray, in which seeing, understanding, and documenting collapse into one another.

McCarthy's first publication, *Common Ruin*, which reflects his work through personal writings, accompanies the exhibition and is co-published with Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König.

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