

## **Of Doubts and Dreams**

Aysha E Arar

ektor garcia

Timothy Yanick Hunter

Manuel Mathieu

Naudline Pierre

Nickola Pottinger

LaRissa Rogers

Brie Ruais

Chrysanne Stathacos

July 18 - September 7, 2024

**COOPER COLE** is pleased to present, *Of Doubts and Dreams*, a group exhibition featuring artworks by Aysha E Arar, ektor garcia, Timothy Yanick Hunter, Manuel Mathieu, Naudline Pierre, Nickola Pottinger, LaRissa Rogers, Brie Ruais, and Chrysanne Stathacos. Inspired by sci-fi/ fantasy author Samuel R. Delany and his unique ability to capture the essence of the human condition through world-building, this exhibition aims to evoke feelings of wonder, mystery, unease, and strength present in his stories through a selection of media including sculpture, sound, painting, and drawing.

The following text by writer and cultural worker, Farhia Tato accompanies the exhibit:

One of the most crucial dialectics in human knowledge is sound and silence. Bridging these two elements is the echo, the trace of creation. If sound is birth and silence is death, the echo trailing into infinity embodies the experience of life, the source of narrative, and a pattern for history.

Sound becomes its own realm of meaning and discourse, where the word is necessarily tied to a cultural specificity that must always contend with its environment. In turn, sound must grapple with the implications of its echoes and the cultural practices of those far enough away to make their own local meanings out of the echo before it decays and is swallowed by infinity. Encoded in sound are the social, cultural, and economic relationships of the future.

Echo is a metaphor of space, but it is also a metaphor of reciprocity. It suggests something from the past, a sound, while also pointing to the future, a repetition into the distance. Echo is the core; everything else starts with the ability to create echoes. Echo is deeply metaphysical. It is the original, which is the repetition, which is artificial, which is real.

There are always sonic signatures and presences in empty space. There is a textural quality of sound and vibration that we pick up on and respond to. It is necessary to acknowledge traditions that involve mining the silence. Whether successful or not, what matters is the attention brought to those silences, the codes, and the attempts to assemble and reimagine them. Though we can't fully identify what's in the silence, it is there we should go.

**Aysha E Arar** (b. 1993, Jaljulia, Israel) uses painting, video, performance and poetry ; she paints on paper, canvas and on the wall, moving from narrative to abstract painting, where she combines imaginary creatures based on Palestinian legends. At the center of her practice lies her own identity. She practices an art of resistance to oppression through the power of images and voice, a quest for freedom and its meaning. In her own words, "I don't know how to draw realistic paintings, I draw from the world of imagination and fantasy. This allows me to merge imagination with reality and all the contradictions that I live in."

Arar has had solo exhibitions at Dvir Gallery Paris, Tel Aviv and Brussels; Sans titre Gallery, Paris, Beit Hagefen, Haifa; Hayarkon 19, Tel Aviv; and Givat Haviva Art Gallery; This Weekend Room, Seoul. Selected group exhibitions include: MO.CO. Panacee, Montpellier; Edmond de Rothschild Center; Umm al-Fahm Gallery; Alfred Institute for Art and Culture; Balkont Gallery; the Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; Kultur Forum Dresden e.V.; Albertinum Museum, Dresden; and Artura Gallery, Kfar Monash. Arar's works are featured in the collections of significant institutions and museums, including SMAK - Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst in Ghent and the Fondation Lafayette Collection. Additionally, she has received several art prizes and grants and has participated in international residencies. Arar lives and works in Jaljulia, Israel.

**ektor garcia** (b. 1985, Red Bluff, USA) is multidisciplinary artist who approaches sculptural installation through wide-ranging experiments with craft techniques and materials. Throughout his practice, he develops a lexicon of crochet, weaving and fibre-work, including the use of ceramic, metal, leatherwork, found materials, and the principles of assemblage and social sculpture.

garcia received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2014, and his MFA from Columbia University, New York in 2016. He was included in the Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art in 2019, the 2021 La Trienal at El Museo del Barrio, and Prospect 5 in New Orleans. garcia has exhibited at institutions and galleries including Foxy Production, Luhring Augustine, Sculpture Center, The New Museum, New York; Etage Projects, Copenhagen; Progetto, Lecce; Marianne Boesky Gallery, Aspen; Museum Folkwang, Essen; LAXART, Los Angeles; Museo de Arte de Zapopan, Guadalajara; Salon ACME, Kurimanzutto, Mexico City; Blaffer Art Museum, Houston; amongst others. garcia lives and works nomadically.

**Timothy Yanick Hunter** (b. 1990, Toronto, Canada) is a multidisciplinary artist and curator. Hunter's practice employs strategies of bricolage to examine non-neutral relationships relating to Black and Afro-diasporic experiences as well as concurrent strategies of decolonization. His approach alternates between exploratory and didactic, with a focus on the political, cultural and social richness of the Black diaspora. Hunter's work often delves into speculative narratives and the intersections of physical space, digital space and the intangible.

Hunter received his BA from the University of Toronto, and has been artist in residence at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; PADA Studios in Barreiro, Portugal; and Black Rock Senegal, Dakar. He was included in the 2022 Toronto Biennial of Art, and longlisted for the 2022 Sobey Art Award. He has exhibited nationally and internationally at Cooper Cole, Gallery 44, A Space Gallery, Toronto; Oakville Galleries, Oakville; Centre Clark, Montreal; ILY2, Portland; Art Gallery of Guelph, Guelph; and PADA Studios, Barreiro; among others. Hunter lives and works in Toronto, Canada.

**Manuel Mathieu** (b. 1986, Haïti) is a multi-disciplinary artist, working with painting, ceramics, film and installation. Mathieu's interests are partially informed from his upbringing in Haiti - just after

the fall of the Duvalier dictatorship - and his experience emigrating to Montréal at the age of 19. His art investigates themes of historical violence, erasure, resilience and cultural approaches to physicality, nature and spiritual legacy.

He obtained an MFA Degree from Goldsmiths, University of London. He had solo exhibitions at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal; the Power Plant, Toronto; K11, Shanghai; the Longlati Foundation, Beijing; and the The Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, North Miami. The Max Ernst Museum, Brühl will present an exhibition dedicated to Mathieu's work in 2025. He received the Best Short Film Award at the 2023 Festival International des Films sur l'Art. Mathieu lives and works in Canada.

**Naudline Pierre** (b. 1989, Leominster, MA) received an M.F.A. from New York Academy of Art, NY, and a B.F.A. from Andrews University, MI. Pierre has been the subject of major solo exhibitions at The Drawing Center (2023) and the Dallas Museum of Art (2021). Pierre participated in the 2019–2020 Studio Museum's Artist Residency and, as a culmination of the program, exhibited in a three-person exhibition at MoMA PS1. Pierre has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, most recently at Prospect.5 New Orleans, LA; the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; the Pérez Art Museum Miami, FL; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada; the Brooklyn Museum, NY; the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; The Dean Collection, Macedon, NY; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; ICA Miami, Miami, FL; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC; Pérez Art Museum Miami, FL; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA; and the CC Foundation, Shanghai, China.

**Nickola Pottinger** (b. 1986, Jamaica) is an artist and curator whose sculptures contain objects and memory. Her sculptural pieces, dubbed “duppies” in Jamaican Patois, morph between figures, animals, and furniture, probing themes of legacy and regeneration. Through this fluid hybridity, Pottinger seamlessly intertwines materiality with memory, revitalizing her family narratives with fresh vitality and resonance.

Raised in Brooklyn, she went on to earn her BFA from The Cooper Union in 2008. Recent exhibitions include Mrs.; Basel Miami Beach; Swivel Gallery; Chapter NY; Sargent's Daughter; and New Museum Triennial, New York; Cooper Cole, Toronto; Galerie Julien Cadet, Paris; and the Galveston Artist Residency, Galveston. Previous solo exhibitions include Parker Gallery, Los Angeles; Deanna Evans Projects; and The Armory Show, New York, which was reviewed by the New York Times. Pottinger will also be the subject of a solo exhibition at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, CT, forthcoming June 2025. Pottinger lives and works in Brooklyn, USA.

**LaRissa Rogers** (b.1996, Charlottesville, USA) is an Asian/American artist based in Richmond and Los Angeles. Her work looks at the intersections of culture, identity, and embedded forms of colonization expressed through perception and psyche. Combining aspects of memory, history, and personal experience, she expands and complicates the capaciousness of blackness by challenging the politics of hybridity, authenticity, and visibility as an Afro-Asian woman. Often asking the question, who and what survives? She simultaneously engages violence and care as co-constructive forces that structure Black life. By using materials that reference colonial histories Rogers re-contextualizes them to grapple with the entanglements of belonging and fugitivity, beauty and horror, life and death, opacity and transparency, care and resistance.

Rogers has exhibited and performed in institutions such as Super Dakota, Brussels; Fields Projects, New York; M+B Gallery; LACE, Los Angeles; the California Museum of Photography, Riverside; The Wattis Institute of Contemporary Art, San Francisco; The Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach; and Documenta 15, Germany, among others. She received the Visual Arts fellowship at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (2022) and The Fine Arts Work Center Fellowship (2023-2024). She held residencies at BEMIS Center of Contemporary Art (2022), and Black Spatial Relics (2022) with upcoming residencies at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Rogers was named 2024 Forbes 30 under 30 in Art and Style, and cofounded the alternative monument and community gathering space "Operations of Care" with Luis Vasquez La Roche, located in Charlottesville, VA. In 2024, Rogers will be installing "Going to Ground," a public sculpture with the Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston.

**Brie Ruais** (b. 1982, Southern California, USA) is an artist working in ceramic sculpture, installation, and performance video. Ruais received her MFA from Columbia University's School of the Arts in 2011 and her BFA from New York University in 2004. She has exhibited internationally in museums and galleries including Museum of New Art, Portsmouth; Contemporary Craft, Pittsburgh; Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University; Seven Sisters Gallery, Houston; Kunstraum Potsdam, Potsdam; Craft Contemporary; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Albertz Benda Gallery; Nicole Klagsbrun, New York; The Anderson Collection, Stanford University, Stanford; Everson Museum, Syracuse; Dallas Museum of Art, Texas; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia; Cooper Cole, Toronto; American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, Washington DC; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; among others. Ruais' work is currently featured in the exhibition "Strange Clay" at the Hayward Gallery, London, UK. Ruais lives and works in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA.

**Chrysanthe Stathacos** (b. 1951, Buffalo, USA) is a multidisciplinary artist of Greek, American and Canadian origin. Her work encompasses printmaking, textile, painting, installation and conceptual art. Stathacos is heavily involved with and influenced by feminism, Greek Mythology, eastern spirituality and Tibetan Buddhism, all of which inform her current artistic practice. Amidst the AIDS crisis in the 1990s, Stathacos' work became deeply engaged with body politics, and her commentary on issues of sexuality and gender became more pronounced. Through her work, Stathacos created images and experiences that connected issues of body, environment, and future. Her works from that time represent this pivotal moment in the artist's practice.

Stathacos has exhibited for over 40 years in museums, galleries and public spaces internationally. Solo exhibitions and projects include A Space; Mercer Union; Chromazone; Art Metropole; Gallery TPW; Cooper Cole; The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto; Participant Inc.; Situations; Creative Time, New York; Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, Buffalo; and The Breeder Gallery, Athens. She has been included by numerous institutions in group exhibitions including the ICA, Boston; PS1, New York; Oakville Galleries, Oakville; Yokohama Triennial, Yokohama; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Nuit Blanche, Toronto; and documenta 14, Athens. Stathacos' works are included in public and private collections including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria; Art Bank, Ottawa; and the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. The *Chrysanthe Stathacos fonds* is located in the Archives and Library, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Stathacos currently lives and works between Athens, Greece and Toronto, Canada.