

CIRCUIT Centre d'art contemporain  
Av. de Montchoisi 9 (accès quai Jurigoz)  
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EN

**Li Shiu Tong and Magnus Hirschfeld**  
**Kévin Blinderman**

**Opening**

**Thursday 5 September 2024, 18:00**

**Opening hours**

**06.09–12.10.24, Tuesday–Saturday 14:00–18:00**

**Public guided tour with the artist**

**Friday 6 September 2024, 17:30**

**In 1935, Li Shiu Tong was called to Nice where his lover Magnus Hirschfeld had just died of a stroke. A mask of Hirschfeld's face was taken in the following hours, the death mask of which Li Shiu Tong would be the keeper until he died in Vancouver in 1993. Together with a few writings, photos, and objects, the mask was saved by Li Shiu Tong's neighbor from the garbage and ultimately donated to the *Magnus Hirschfeld Gesellschaft* in Berlin. The death mask and a selection made from these materials by Kévin Blinderman are at the core of his solo exhibition "Li Shiu Tong and Magnus Hirschfeld" at CIRCUIT Centre d'art contemporain.**

Kévin Blinderman paints the portrait of an extraordinary couple. Extraordinary not only because of Li Shiu Tong's and Magnus Hirschfeld's difference in age, origins, and status, but also because of the lack of representations we have today of gay male relationships which were lived in a rather public and self-determined way at the time. The portrait painted by Kévin Blinderman is, first of all, a material one, by laying out a selection of objects and materials that help to determine the nature of the relationship between Li Shiu Tong and Magnus Hirschfeld. Secondly, Blinderman paints an intellectual portrait of a couple who fought throughout their lives for and with catering to the research on sexual and gender minorities.

Li Shiu Tong (1907–1993), a medical student from British Hong Kong, met the German-Jewish physician and sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935) at St John's University in Shanghai in 1931. Magnus Hirschfeld was on an 18-month lecture tour from New York City to Shanghai, on the last leg of which Li Shiu Tong was to assist him. At the end of the lecture tour in 1932, Li Shiu Tong moved to Switzerland with Magnus Hirschfeld. In the political context that led to the election of Adolf Hitler and the destruction of Hirschfeld's *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* in Berlin by the Nazis in 1933, Magnus Hirschfeld was forced to live in exile, first in Ascona and Zürich, then in Paris and Nice.

In addition to the material and intellectual portraits of Li Shiu Tong and Magnus Hirschfeld, Kévin Blinderman paints another, which is less a speculative portrait than a reparatory one. He adds to the canon of modern figurative painting a missing motif that should have existed at the time: men kissing. The kind of men who can't keep their hands off each other. A kiss between lovers. A French kiss rather than a *Bisou caramel* which is the title of Kévin Blinderman's ongoing series of oil paintings on canvas.

# CIRCUIT

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Kevin Blinderman (b. 1994) lives and works in Paris. He has recently exhibited at Sultana in Paris and Arles, at Haus N. in Athens, with Conditions, Toronto, at Basel Social Club, at Kunst-Werke Berlin, at Confort Moderne in Poitiers, with the Boros Collection at Berghain in Berlin, at Profil in Paris, at BPA// Raum run by the Berlin program for artists, and at Kunsthalle Bern.

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## **Support**

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