

Zaid Arshad, Matt Keegan, Dena Yago

Pass the Aux

September 7 — October 5, 2025

Opening Reception Sunday September 7, 2025, 12-4PM

28 Varick Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11237

...he thought he had forgotten about this sensation, but no, he feels the sweetness melting on his tongue again, just like when he was a young boy.

His father hated the sound of his shoes dragging on the ground. He came up with a plan to fix his child. Every night when he came home from work, he asked the kid to walk from one end of the living room to the other in a straight line. He awaited the boy on the other side. If the kid could walk straight and not drag his shoes, he would be rewarded with a chocolate bar tucked away in the father's palm.

It took him many tries to earn his first, or maybe that's just how he remembers it now. He got forced by his father to walk back and forth so many times that he started to weep, which made the father angrier than he already was, frustrated by the child's inability to make such a simple correction. When he eventually learned to lift each of his feet up every time he moved and earned the chocolate bar, he didn't open it in front of his father. He put them in a tin can on his bookshelf. When he could not fall asleep or wake up in the middle of the night, he snuck out of bed to grab a snack from the shelves. It made him feel like a rebel, that he was eating sweets after he had already brushed his teeth diligently, against the rules his father taught him.

He wonders where the tin can is now. He can almost picture how shiny it looked when moonlight caught it through his bedroom windows. The last time he thought of the can was when he read how Petit-Jean pointed at a sardine can floating in the water and said to Jacques Lacan: "You see that can? Do you see it? Well, it doesn't see you!". He imagined a fantasy world in which the tin can was animated and perpetually watching everything in his childhood bedroom. He tried to picture the cartoonish reactions the tin can would express every time it saw him eating a chocolate bar in the dark.

He wonders if somewhere in this room right now someone or something is watching him, from the point of light that everything that looks at him is situated. He is sitting on the lap of a stranger in bed, who is circling his index finger down his throat and around his mouth. For some reason he tastes the sweat of this man particularly well. It's thick and very sweet. He becomes self-conscious that his mind is drifting from sex. To compensate, he inserts the middle finger of the stranger in his mouth too. He tastes even sweeter.

His mind can't help but wander off again as the stranger pins him down on the bed and kisses him all over. He's thinking of the boy he loves that he has not seen in almost two months. The more he misses him the more he does not know how to reach out. The last time he spent the night at his beloved's, they woke up early together the next morning to go to work. They were standing bare feet in the kitchen while the boy made coffee. He remembers kissing him on the back of his neck when he turned away to rinse something in the sink. He stood on tiptoes with both of his heels off the cold ceramic floor tiles to reach his lover. He wished they could both hold there still forever, but he had to let go and get back on his feet.

The boy asked him how he would like his coffee. "No sugar, but pass me the milk please", he smiled.

Zaid Arshad is an artist, writer, and curator living and working in Brooklyn, NY. Recent and upcoming exhibitions and projects include Parent Company (New York, NY) (2025), Benny's Video (Brooklyn, NY) (2025), Turquoise (Brooklyn, NY) (2025), and Kunsthalle Der Licht (New York, NY) (2024).

Over the course of his career, **Matt Keegan** (b. 1976, Manhasset, NY) has worked fluidly across mediums, creating sculpture, photographs, videos, and text-based work that probe the myriad ways in which art and language mediate the personal experience of physical space as well as historical, social, and political events. Matt Keegan's work has been exhibited at museums such as the Athenaeum at the University of Georgia, Athens, GA; Museum of Modern Art, NY; Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, TX; Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, AT; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, Bilbao, ES, and Berlin, DE; The Kitchen, New York, NY; The Art Institute of Chicago, IL; and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY. He received his MFA from Columbia University in 2004, attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2001, and his BFA from Carnegie Mellon University in 1998. Keegan is currently a Senior Critic in the Painting & Printmaking Department at Yale University, and lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Dena Yago is an artist, writer, and founding member of the trend forecasting group K-HOLE. She has a forthcoming collection of essays published by After Eight, Paris, and a book with Viscose Journal, both to be released in 2026. Recent exhibitions and presentations include Induction, The Intermission, Piraeus (2024); The Modern Window, MoMA, New York (2023); Body Hero, Sandy Brown, Berlin (2023); Capacity, JTT Gallery, New York (2023); Industry City, High Art, Paris (2022); Image Power, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem (2020); Dry Season, Bodega (now Derosia), New York (2020); Force Majeure, High Art, Paris (2019); and Made in L.A., Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016). Recent publications include Fade the Lure (After Eight Books, 2019). Her writing has appeared in e-flux journal, Flash Art, and frieze magazine. Yago lives and works in New York City.

Benny's Video is a nomadic curatorial project conceived and operated by Craig Jun Li since March 2025. The current programming is generously hosted in the studio space of artist Grant Mooney.

All inquiries to bennysvideoprojectspace@gmail.com