

Peres Projects is pleased to present *647(a)* by American artist Dean Sameshima, featuring a new series of “documentary paintings” based off of the artist’s media archive, and a continued investigation of queer desires and nostalgia through the method of documentary. This will be his seventh exhibition with the gallery.

In his artistic practice, Sameshima is both a collector of images and an archivist. For him, the very act of collection is an exercise in obsession. His work is centered around the accumulation and reworking of imagery which pertains to porn, DIY movements, punk and queer culture; imagery which, whether culled from the internet, zines, encyclopedias, or pornographic publications, operate like notes from the underground and coded signifiers of gay culture. In this way, Sameshima is conserving the fragile narratives of subculture and marginalized social groups, revising their symbols and languages into compositions, and in effect, giving them a new context, a life resurrected.

His painted works are deeply devoted to the act of documentary, which through the pictorial images he works from to create them, stem from the artists’ continued photography practice. The compositions of these new paintings are made based off book covers, receipts and black and white photocopies from the artists’ extensive library. With each work, Sameshima encounters the documentary power of painting, and its own capability to “record” in a seemingly pragmatic way, like a snapshot or a photocopy. Yet an important contradiction lies in his process, for his paintings at a distance appear to be silkscreened when they were in fact hand-painted. The Warholian effect of this tells of a more concealed process to the work, not unlike the hidden narratives in the references he works from.

Despite the machine-made quality one at first encounters in viewing the numbers, dates, and information which float alone on his canvases, there is something implicitly human which the viewer arrives at by moving closer to Sameshima’s works. It is that their very existence, the lengthy and contemplative painterly process from which they were selected and came into being, is an act of self-preservation and love, and, more politically, an important step towards uplifting queer and forgotten histories.

Dean Sameshima (b. 1971 Torrance, California, US) currently lives and works in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include Gavlak Gallery, Los Angeles, She Works Flexible Gallery, Houston, and Galeria Raquel Ponce, Madrid. Institutional exhibitions include Tacoma Art Museum (touring exhibition), Kunstraum Düsseldorf, Tate Modern, London, and Extra City Center for Contemporary

Art, Antwerp. His work is included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

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