

Simon Benjamin, Maria Jose Garcia Estevez, Clare Koury, Alyssa Matthews, Carly Ries, Viktor Timofeev, Dex Vandersall

The Long Dark

Feb 27 through Apr 11, 2026

Cuchifritos Gallery & Parent Company are pleased to present *The Long Dark*, a group exhibition organized in dialogue with Parent Company's winter solo exhibitions, on view February 27 – April 11, 2026.

This exhibition emerged from an invitation. In conversation, curators Yani aviles and Ada Potter imagined what foregrounding collaboration could look like during this time. Organically, they developed an exhibition structure that would bridge their two locations and programs, allowing associations to shape a curatorial narrative that reflects and coheres disparate connections. They invited Bryce Kroll and Leonardo Madriz (the two exhibiting artists at Parent Company during the run of this exhibition) to share lists of artist friends and peers whose practices resonate with and expand their own. From these constellations of influence and exchange, a group of artists was selected whose work reflects shared material, conceptual, and ethical concerns. *The Long Dark* is less a thematic grouping than a meeting point, an exhibition shaped by relational thinking, mutual regard, and sustained conversation.

The exhibition takes its title from writer and psychotherapist Francis Weller's notion of the "long dark," a generative, necessary period of descent, gestation, and not looking away, but rather a turning inward. Across varied media and approaches, the artists in *The Long Dark* engage with time beyond linear or Western frameworks, turning instead toward geographic time, cyclical processes, ancestral memory, and what Weller calls "soul-time" (i.e., a deeper experience of time, a slowing down to engage with the oscillation of our inner lives and the natural world, offering meaningful points of reflection, connection, and ultimately processing emotions). In this time of polycrisis and grief, the concept of the "long dark" felt especially poignant and resonant.

Many of the works consider the dignity, histories, and latent energies embedded within found, discarded, or organic materials: corn husks, sand, graphite, copper, and wax. Photographic images, perceptual slippages situated in form, and ritual objects become carriers of memory and meaning, sites where loss, labor, migration, belief, care, and transformation accumulate.

All things are birthed from the dark: the Big Bang, inside the womb, seed-to-soil, the deep sea.

Chaos precipitates creation, and how do we get to know it?

Most fear falling. I know I do. And as we age, our bodies become heavier, more fragile, so a fall can mean so much more—to the body, to the mind.

On the ground, we are closer to the earth's skin. Contact. That's what we crave, a knowing, a syncing. The earth has its own rhythm, a vibrational axis of ley lines and frequencies just beneath the surface, and we too have ours. Either resonant or disharmonic; sometimes we syncopate.

But what comes first in sensing—touch? sight? taste?

And what about time?

If time is a memory, constructed of materials, and measured by our emotions, then who's to say we are ever moving forward? Maybe "upward" or "downward" is more accurate. Like the helix, our DNA, cyclical ladders that make matter animate to construct our world.

Ascending, descending, ascending, descending, back and forth to locate some understanding, a deeper meaning about who we are, now, and how we got this way. Or maybe, to sustain.

The word “sustain” has two meanings:

- 1. To strengthen or support, physically or mentally*
- 2. Undergo, endure, or suffer (something unpleasant)*

Let’s slow down.

When you first enter a dark space, it takes a while for your eyes to adjust. You don’t think about it; it just happens. Your body innately knows what to do. Your pupils dilate to let in more light. They expand to receive.

Darkness is the territory where myth, ritual, and reality collide. Imagination is transmitted here, and these artists reveal.

About the artists

Simon Benjamin is a Jamaican artist based in New York, whose practice considers how the past ripples into the present in unexpected ways. Using the sea and coastal space as frameworks, his current body of work explores how lesser-known histories and colonial legacies impact our present and contribute to an interconnected future.

His work has been exhibited internationally, including PATRON Gallery, Chicago, IL (2025); Malta Biennale, Malta (2024); Jacob Lawrence Gallery, Seattle, WA (2025); Swivel Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (2024); Baxter St. CCNY, New York, NY (2023); documenta 15, Kassel, Germany (2022); Kingston Biennial, National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica (2022); Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Governors Island, New York (2021).

Maria Jose Garcia Estevez is a sculptor and installation artist, making precarious amalgamations of materials sourced from Mexico and the United States. Maria Jose was born and raised in Mexico and currently resides in New York City. A recent resident of the Hercules Studio Program 2023-2025, she received an MFA from Hunter College and the 2022 Eva Hesse Excellence Sculpture Award at Hunter College.

Clare Koury is an artist and educator from Kentucky living in New York City. Her work begins from the assumption that form is operative; that is, form exerts effects in space. Like the crystal whose outward growth is determined by relations fixed at its core, material manifests as a living consequence of its own internal order, its mechanical properties and symbolic resonance being natural outgrowths of the same ordering primary principle. So then sculpture is a question of structure, and structure is a question of form's impact on the surrounding field.

Koury received her MFA from Columbia University and a BA from the University of Chicago. Her early training in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics informs a method grounded in close reading, source criticism, and the analysis of transmission, shaping an approach to form attentive to how meaning is conveyed, transformed, and stabilized across contexts. She was the recipient of the Windgate Fellowship at SUNY Purchase (2025) and Josephine Sculpture Park (2021), and has exhibited at institutions including Randy Alexander Gallery, Blade Study, the Jewish Museum, Canary Projects, Disneyland Paris, and the Fall River Museum of Contemporary Art.

Alyssa Matthews is an artist living and working in upstate New York. Her sculptures rely on the tactile offerings of her environment and their cycles of story and renewal. She draws on her childhood ritual work as a Catholic altar server in South Louisiana and her mother’s work to coordinate decorations in their church year round, according to Liturgical seasons. The interplay of performed ritual and unseen labor is a dynamic that animates Matthews’s pursuits in the studio, alongside a fixation with the qualities of found objects. She is captivated by evidence of lived lives in the borrowed, the scavenged, and the solicited thing: obscure shards from the street, domestic fixtures from

her childhood home, forgotten farm tools from the rural landscape of upstate New York, and the intimate castoffs of daily life with her children.

Carly Ries is an artist based in New York City, working across photography, film, and book form, moving between lens-based and tactile media. Rooted in queer and feminist perspectives, their practice explores perception, permeability, and transformation. Their photobooks are in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Rijksmuseum, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Ries is the curator of The Peter J. Cohen Collection, a 20th-century vernacular photography archive.

Viktor Timofeev is an artist from Riga, Latvia, living in New York. He makes paintings, videos, and installations that explore how people navigate language, technology, and systems of rules. His work draws on personal experience and unfolds over time, often without clear endings.

Recent solo exhibitions include the Latvian National Museum of Art in Riga (2025), Editorial Projects in Vilnius (2025), Interstate Projects in New York (2021), and Karlin Studios in Prague (2020). Recent group exhibitions include 1st Klaipeda Biennial (2025), 19th Tallinn Print Triennial (2025), Malmö Konstmuseum in Malmö (2025), Sapieha Palace in Vilnius (2025), Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-On-Hudson (2025), Kohta Kunsthalle in Helsinki (2023), Tallinn Photomonth in Tallinn (2023), National Gallery Prague in Prague (2021) and the 14th Baltic Triennial at Contemporary Art Center in Vilnius (2021). Additional presentations include a solo evening at the e-flux Screening Room, New York, and a premiere at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Dex Vandersall is an artist currently based in New York City. His practice searches for exploitable tensions between form, material, subject, and history. He makes use of gestures and methods like sanding, carving, patination, and painting onto a range of materials, from inert glass to reactive metals, as well as traditional surfaces such as linen and paper. The sums of these processes are paintings that erode the figure-ground perception, coercing the object and viewer into unstable relational terrains. Vandersall's work has been exhibited in the United States and abroad, with recent exhibitions including "Nostalgic Mayfly" at Stilllife, Shanghai, and "Comfort Zones" at New Uncanny Gallery, New York, NY.

About the curators

Yani aviles is a transdisciplinary conceptual artist and cultural worker whose practice positions art as a methodology for medicine-making and collective inquiry. Working across time-based practices, sculpture, installation, and text, they transform research into multisensory, participatory, and site-responsive works that examine the emotional architectures shaping personal, historical, ecological, and institutional realities.

aviles serves as Associate Curator & Program Manager at Artists Alliance Inc. in New York, supporting emerging and underrepresented artists through exhibitions, residencies, and public programs. They hold an MFA from Northwestern University and a BFA with honors from SAIC, and have exhibited and lectured nationally and internationally.

Ada Potter is an artist and curator living in Brooklyn. She has an MFA in Sculpture from Pratt Institute and a BA in Art History and Studio Art from Barnard College. She is the Founder and Director of Parent Company, a non-profit artist-run gallery space. She has participated in exhibitions at A.I.R. Gallery, Public Swim, NADA Governors Island, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, and Transmitter Gallery.

Accessibility

If desired, a folding chair can be provided, should standing for short or long periods interfere with your viewing experience during your visit. Additionally, sound-dampening headphones and tinted glasses are available and will be provided upon request for visitors for whom the sound or lighting of the gallery space is disruptive. A quiet, off-site/off-view space can be arranged for those with a need during viewing hours. Baby strollers are welcome in Essex Market and Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space. Both facilities are wheelchair accessible, and service animals on a leash are permitted.

If you have questions about accessing Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space or attending programs, please email gallery@artistsallianceinc.org.

With thanks

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