

RAINRAIN

Spiritual World

Organized by Theodor Nymark

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Featuring

Lara Joy Evans
Joe Bun Keo
Theodor Nymark
Lea Porsager
Amitai Romm
Quay Quinn Wolf
Kay Yoon

"I ran and ran, feeling the earth beneath my hooves, the wind in my mane, and the sun on my back. In that moment, I was more than a horse. I was a force of nature, a living, breathing testament to the beauty and power of the wild."

— *Spirit*, from the 2002 film *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron*

Imagine a majestic locomotive that rushes through the skyrocketing landscape, black smoke coming from its pipes, the rumbling sound, as an earthquake. That black smoke, just like a ghost that haunts the present. Like a bewildered aura looking for a new body.

Spiritual World is a remix of Alfred Stieglitz's 1923 piece "Spiritual America," a photograph depicting a close-up view of a castrated horse. The stallion - a metaphor for the domestication of the natural world and strapped in reins as the machine it has become. Full of wild (and sexual) power, constrained by settlers and a symbol of the natives and their spiritual freedom. Now, castrated and without reproductive power, bound to the fence as a car in a parking lot.

Like a greasy camera lens or a misted shower stall, the vague figuration and blurred representation at play demand our earnest and dearest registration. One should feel touchy, playful and open. One might crave a world of rationality and logic, where even ignorance is simulated and where the unknowns are known and ridiculed. Unlike a jester, we shouldn't act stupid, but become stupid.

In other words, to enter a museum, to stare and squint at an artwork, abstract or figurative, ephemeral or representational, will always demand sensible skills. Skills, that have been taught wrongfully to a broad public, a public demanding logic, rules and a clear image. One should fill the museum with fog, walk around blinded and tear apart the press release.

The study of self and a deity outside of one's corpus, like a separation from the environment, as if, that's even possible. As if spirituality exists within certain categorial settings, within secluded situations and around a particular group of individuals. Spirituality castrated (as an H&M Ramones t-shirt) commodified and encapsulated like a domesticated being. Spiritually, like a multifaceted metaphor, many-sided, a prism with no central outpost, only imagination. Not just a lake, a mirror. Not just a car, a vehicle.

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Now, within the scene, within the city. Spirituality has only a few initial roads that lead to bliss. Either you reject modernity or you embrace tradition. But within this leap, between before and now, a place must exist for one to embrace spirituality as a realm of thought and rest. In this new world, this spiritually castrated society suggests a reconfiguration of spirituality and how it might exist beyond (and between) conservative revolted reactionary religious ideals and ultra-liberal new-age paganism.

Perhaps we should log on, embrace the cringe (obliviousness) and engage with spirituality, not as a set of tangible rules that often function as moral codes and jurisdiction imposed by any imperial state, but as a state of experience and sensation through which we perceive our surroundings—not analytically and conceptually, but as simple and sensible beings, like a child, a dog or a freed and eruptive stallion.

Text by Theodor Nymark

About the Artists

Lara Joy Evans (b. 1993, Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Evans received a BA from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Evans' recent solo exhibitions include: *Silver Globe*, Reflet Machine, Paris, France; *Empedocles*, Final Hot Desert, Lund, NV; *Arnhemse Uitnacht*, Code Rood, Arnhem, The Netherlands; *Primal_ditch_BP (before present)*, Galerija Miroslav Kraljevic, Zagreb, Croatia. Evans' recent group exhibitions include: *Chanterelle*, *The last man on planet earth*, ASHES/ASHES, New York, NY; *Phantom Power*, Torus, Los Angeles, CA; *Dreams in Deixis*, Tufenkian Fine Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; *Pineal Eye Infection*, Seasons, Los Angeles, CA; *Paradise on Mars*, OJ Art Space; Istanbul, Turkey.

Joe Bun Keo (b. 1987, Bristol, Connecticut) is a Khmer/Khmae (Cambodian) American artist working and residing in Connecticut. Keo has a (BFA) from the Hartford Art School at the University of Hartford and (an MFA) from the Pacific Northwest College of Art. In 2023 he received the Real Art Award and a solo exhibition at Real Art Ways in Hartford. He is also a recipient of the Artist Fellowship Emerging Recognition from the Connecticut Office of Arts. Joe's work focuses on unpacking intergenerational trauma through the scope of *neomaterialism*, the most recent iteration the Duchampian school of thought on readymades and found objects. He has two children, both of whom are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. His spouse is chronically ill. Keo is the son of Khmer Rouge genocide survivors and refugees. His experiences as an arts worker, sole income provider/primary caretaker of a family of four, and a child of immigrants, has honed Keo's interests, focus, and dedication to extracting meaning, value, and narratives from both personal objects and recreation of said commodities drawn from memory, dreams, and traumatic experiences. Keo's work embodies the belief that it is not necessary to fabricate or create new commodities, but rather utilize what already exists in a society that is in excess of materials. The materiality loaded with emotion is a reminder that the things we leave behind will speak volumes of our past, present, and future. There are stories behind anything and everything.

Theodor Nymark (b. 1997) is a Danish contemporary artist, filmmaker, and curator who lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark. He holds an MA from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts from the class of Simon Dybbroe Møller. Notable exhibitions include Spread Museum (Entrevaux, France), RainRain Gallery (New York, USA), Servando Gallery (Havana, Cuba), Kerka Gallery (St. Petersburg), Overgaden Institut for Contemporary art (Copenhagen), Den Frie Udstillingsbygning (Copenhagen), Brigade Gallery (Copenhagen), Kunsthal Charlottenborg (Copenhagen), Zirka Space (München), Garage 9 Gallery (Bologna), International Biennale of Tashkent (Uzbekistan), and Partara Gallery (Tbilisi). In addition, Nymark has been the founder and curator of the exhibition place Salon 75, located in Copenhagen since 2017. Recent notable curatorial ventures include exhibitions at RAINRAIN (New York), The Balcony (The Hague), Berlinskej Model (Prague), Fabrika CCI (Moscow), and Spazio Orr (Brescia). As an artist and curator, Theodor Nymark systematically examines the notions of ecology, field and environment,

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positioning it as both a catalytic force and a reservoir of material and conceptual potential. His practice intricately weaves societal constructs, technological facets, and biological elements together with mythology, spirituality, and phenomenology. Within this narrative framework, Nymark addresses issues such as ecocide, national identity, and land politics, exploring their interconnectedness and impact on ecological thinking and consciousness.

Lea Porsager (b. 1981) graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen, and the Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, in 2010. Porsager holds a PhD from the Malmö Art Academy and Lund University, 2021. Porsager's practice interweaves fabulation and speculation with a variety of mediums, including film, sculpture, photography, and text. Her works encompass science, politics, feminism, and esotericism. Porsager was awarded the Eckersberg Medal in 2023 and was selected as a CERN Honorary Mention for the Collide International Award in 2018. In 2012, Porsager participated in dOCUMENTA (13) with Anatta Experiment. She was awarded the Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Scholarship in 2014. In 2015, Porsager partook in the 14th Istanbul Biennial: SALTWATER: A Theory of Thought Forms. Porsager's earthwork and memorial Gravitational Ripples was inaugurated in June 2018 in Stockholm, Sweden, commemorating the Swedish lives lost in the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia.

Amitai Romm (b.1985) is an artist and researcher living in Copenhagen. Often combining archaic, mundane and high-tech materials and references, Romm makes installations and images as forms of science fiction. He is a co-founder of Diakron, a studio for transdisciplinary research and practice, as well as Primer, a platform for artistic and organisational development, located in the headquarter of the global water technology company Aquaporin in Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark. Both Romm's and Diakron's work has been presented at museums and art contexts internationally; including Kunstmuseum Bonn, Moderna Museet and, most recently, Shanghai Biennale.

Quay Quinn Wolf (b.1989, New York, NY) is a sculptor living and working in Brooklyn, NY. Wolf's work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. Recent solo shows include Rest, Prairie, Chicago, IL (2022); Repair, Jack Barrett, New York, NY (2022). Recent group exhibitions include Air Service Basel, Lo Brutto Stahl, Basel, Switzerland (2024); Plus One, Ensemble, New York, NY (2024); Ideal Shapes of Disappearing, Silke Linder, New York, NY (2023); Helmet Lang seen by Antwaun Sargent, Hannah Traore, New York, NY (2023); Sneckdown, EACC, Castellón, Spain (2023); In Practice: You may go, but this will bring you back, SculptureCenter, New York (2021). His work has been reviewed in publications including Artforum, Art in America, The New York Times and i-D magazine.

Kay Yoon (b.1994, Seoul, Korea) delves into the intricate connections among social rituals, sensory experiences, and identity within spatial contexts. Yoon's acute awareness of the tension between tradition and modernity informs her restrained, minimalist aesthetic. Her work adeptly navigates power dynamics, personal struggles, and broader cultural narratives, reflecting a profound commitment to both individual and collective memory. Rooted in physical and sensory experiences, her artistic expression unfolds through performances and bodily engagements with her sculptures. The complexity of identity in the post-modern era, along with the significance of physical encounters, is skillfully abstracted by the artist's playful incorporation of ceremonial function and cryptic gestures. Kay Yoon completed her diploma studies at the Sculpture Department of the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich under Prof. Alexandra Bircken. Previously, she studied media art at the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig and sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg with Prof. Michael Sailstorfer and Prof. Ottmar Hörl. Her works have been exhibited internationally, including at the CICA Museum in Kimpo (2017), Baumwollspinnerei Leipzig (2020), Kunstpavillon Munich (2021), intr.pblc Copenhagen (2022), Circolo, Lia Mostra d'Ert, St. Ulrich (2022), Trauma Bar und Kino Berlin (2022) and System D Paris (2024). She had her solo exhibitions at 4D Projektraum BBk Leipzig (2021), Sic! Elephanthouse Lucerne (2021), SOMA 300 Berlin (2022) and Sauers Berlin (2023).