

**California College of the Arts Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice
in partnership with CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts present:**

To Know Herself

An exhibition of work by Tammy Rae Carland and Macon Reed

April 4–April 27, 2019

Curated by Yomna Osman, in partial fulfillment of the dual-degree Master of Arts in Curatorial Practice and Visual and Critical Studies



Macon Reed, *Eulogy for the Dyke Bar*, Plastic and digital photo reproductions. Dimensions vary. Wayfarers Gallery, New York, NY, 2015.

San Francisco, CA—March 7, 2019—*To Know Herself* explores the lesbian bar as a place for social and political change. Bars dedicated exclusively to queer women are systematically disappearing around the country, particularly in San Francisco. Once a thriving ground for queer culture with numerous spaces where queer women gathered, there are few remaining bars specifically for queer women here today. Maud’s, which operated from 1961 to 1989, and Amelia’s, which opened its doors in 1978 and closed in 1991, were two of the most popular and longest-running spaces both owned by respected LGBTQ activist Rikki Streicher (1922–1994). More recently, The Lexington Club, a beloved lesbian dive bar and LGBTQ cultural landmark located in the Mission, closed its doors in 2015. This was one of the last historic lesbian bars in San Francisco. Queer spots have since emerged in the city, but none have gathered as vibrant a community as any of these now-lost bars.

To Know Herself utilizes the bar in CCA Wattis Institute’s event space in lieu of its gallery space next door in order to study the different ways artists are thinking about lesbian bars and the impact of their disappearance—as well as possibilities for their eventual reconstruction. In a commissioned performance installation titled *Save the last dance for me* (2019), artist and CCA Provost

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Tammy Rae Carland invites visitors to dance with her to a looped, three-minute song performed by Los Angeles-based musician Kelly Martin, also commissioned for this piece. The music becomes audible only when participants stand on the re-created dance floor.

While guests are invited to the dance floor during gallery hours, the special appearance of Carland will conclude each day. On some days, Carland will share the last dance with a visitor. On others, Carland will dance alone while waiting for audiences to show up and, hopefully, share the last dance with her. *Save the last dance for me* is a visual and physical reminder of the power of music to pull people together in synchronicity, even for a fleeting three minutes.

Artist Macon Reed's *Eulogy for the Dyke Bar* (2015), for this CCA Wattis presentation, is a three-part installation featuring a jukebox, two neon signs, and 20 framed archival photographs from various lesbian bars in San Francisco. The non-functional jukebox stands as an abstraction of the familiar icon long-associated with bringing people together. The neon sign reads "Dyke Bar," not only pointing to the main subject of the show but also covering the atmosphere of the entire exhibition with a feeling of vibrancy and movement brought about through the light and the color of the simple yet effective piece. The framed archival photos call attention to the rich history of these spaces, in San Francisco and around the world, that demonstrate the value of convening queer community in real time and space. While the reasons and causes for the disappearance of these spaces in San Francisco range from rising real estate costs and shifting demographics to increasing reliance on technology as a social network, the absence of these physical spaces remains an undeniable loss to the queer community.

To Know Herself is accompanied by a series of public programs including: a night of performance with Zahra Axinn, a Bay Area-based multi-genre writer; a salon discussion on how to maintain these spaces in our current moment; and a night of film screenings that further explore the impact of gathering spaces on social and political change.

A parallel publication, *Your Presence is Requested*, will be produced alongside the exhibition. It will contain a forward by the CCA Graduate Curatorial Practice Program chair and editor for this publication, James Voorhies; a catalog essay by curator Yomna Osman; an original piece by a Bay Area artist and writer Jenny Odell; and a reprint of an essay by Axinn.

About the Artists

Tammy Rae Carland (b. 1965, Portland, ME) is a multi-media artist working mainly in photography. Carland is the current provost at California College of the Arts (CCA). She is a former co-owner of the independent lesbian music label Mr. Lady Records and Videos. Her work engages with queer identity and intimacy; it also looks at marginality as a fertile site for resistance as opposed to victimhood or disempowerment. This April, she will participate in the group exhibition *Queer California: Untold Stories* at the Oakland Museum of California.

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Macon Reed (b. 1981, Arlington, VA) is an artist working in sculpture, installation, video, radio documentary, painting, and participatory projects. Reed completed her MFA at the University of Illinois at Chicago as a University Fellow in 2013 and received her BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2007. Motivated by human relationships within evolving queer and intersectional feminist frameworks, her projects recognize that aesthetic form and social engagement are not mutually exclusive but rather, deeply intertwined. Reed is currently participating in a group show at the San Francisco Museum of Craft and Design titled *Interior/Exterior*.

About CCA's Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice

At the time of its founding, the MA in Curatorial Practice was the first program of its kind in the United States. A highly interdisciplinary, two-year experience, CCA's curating program focuses on the role of the curator as both a productive agent and positive mediator who builds bridges between artists and their publics. Alongside diverse faculty and a cohort of recent art history graduates and other art professionals, students engage critically and creatively with contemporary visual culture. They consider broad themes, such as the politics of space and the changing roles of museums and institutions.

As of fall 2018, the program's central hub for learning is off campus at the Curatorial Research Bureau (CRB). Located inside the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the CRB is a combined bookshop, exhibition space, and platform for public programming. Students are integrated into YBCA's infrastructure, giving them opportunities to witness planning meetings, conversations among curators and administrators, and marketing initiatives for exhibitions.

About CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts

Founded in 1998 at California College of the Arts in San Francisco and located a few blocks from its campus, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts is a nonprofit exhibition venue and research institute dedicated to contemporary art and ideas. As an exhibition space, it commissions and shows new work by emerging and established artists from around the world. Recent solo exhibitions include *Diamond Stingily: Doing the Best I Can*; *Rosha Yaghmai: Miraclegrow*; *Adam Linder: Full Service* (which traveled to Mudam Luxembourg); *Ken Lum: What's Old is Old for a Dog*; *Henrik Olesen: The Walk*; *Melanie Gilligan: Parts-wholes*; *Howard Fried: Derelicts*; *Laura Owens: Ten Paintings*; *Jos de Gruyter & Harald Thys: Tram 3* (which traveled to MoMA PS1); *Josephine Pryde: Lapses in Thinking by the Person I Am* (which traveled to ICA Philadelphia and earned Pryde a 2016 Turner Prize nomination); *K.r.m. Mooney: En, set*; *Sam Lewitt: More Heat Than Light* (which traveled to Kunsthalle Basel and the Swiss Institute, New York); and *Ellen Cantor: Cinderella Syndrome* (which traveled to Künstlerhaus Stuttgart). A recent group exhibition, *Mechanisms*, traveled to Secession in Vienna in an expanded form entitled *Other Mechanisms*.

As a research institute, the Wattis dedicates an entire year to reflect on the work of a single artist, which informs a regular series of public programs and publications involving the field's most prominent artists and thinkers. The 2018–2019 season is dedicated to the writer Dodie Bellamy; past seasons featured Joan Jonas, Andrea Fraser, David Hammons, and Seth Price.

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The Wattis also hosts an annual Capp Street Artist-in-Residence, one of the earliest and longest-running artist-in-residence programs in the country, founded in 1983 by Ann Hatch as Capp Street Project, and incorporated into the Wattis Institute in 1998. Each year, an artist comes to live and work in San Francisco for a semester, teaches a graduate seminar at CCA, and presents an exhibition. Recent participants include contemporary (2017–2018), Melanie Gilligan (2016–2017), Carissa Rodriguez (2015–2016), Nairy Baghramian (2014–2015), Claire Fontaine (2013–2014), Ryan Gander (2012–2013), Harrell Fletcher and Kris Martin (2011–2012), Paulina Olowska and Renata Lucas (2010–2011), and Abraham Cruzvillegas (2009–2010).

For more information, visit wattis.org.

About California College of the Arts

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through the practice and critical study of art, architecture, design, and writing. Benefitting from its San Francisco Bay Area location and a faculty of expert practitioners, the college prepares students for lifelong creative work by cultivating innovation, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility. Graduates are highly sought after by the world's cutting-edge companies, architecture and design firms, cultural and arts organizations, and more. CCA is currently expanding its San Francisco campus with new student housing and a new building by award-winning firm Studio Gang that will open in the coming years.

For more information, visit cca.edu.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

California College of the Arts Graduate Program in Curatorial Practice in partnership with CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts present: ***To Know Herself***

Opening reception: April 4, 2019, at 6pm

Location: 350 Kansas Street (between 16th and 17th streets), San Francisco

Gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 12–6pm; closed Sunday and Monday

Admission: Free

Information: 415.355.9670 or visit wattis.org

Social: Instagram // Twitter // Facebook @WattisArts

MEDIA CONTACT

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