



CRUISING UTOPIA: SCENES FROM THE ROMA-QUEER IMAGINATION

Béla Váradi, Joy Charpentier, Mersud Selman

20 September 2024 – 11 January 2025. Thur – Sat: 4 pm till 7pm

Opening: Thursday, 19. September 2024, 7pm till 10pm

The exhibition 'Cruising Utopia. Scenes from the Roma-Queer Imagination' explores artistic works by Roma artists from LGBTQIA+ communities. The artists combine memories, their subjectivities and experiences of discrimination as well as the experience of collective protest by utilising the power of the imagination. Testimonies of experiences gain legitimacy when the event described is seen as significant. Historically, the narratives of Roma queer people have been silenced, erased or cornered, considered unimportant if not perverse, and kept only in archives as records of medical depravity or as criminal files. It follows that the (re)recording – or retelling – of these stories is an act of engagement and validation. The works produced by Romani queer artists are bridges or mediations that allow traditionally racialized subjects who live (by necessity) in invisibility to take a central position. The exhibition shows how testimonies and imaginations of Roma queer people can create a 'cathartic dignity' and visibility for marginalised communities.

Through the performances of Joy Charpentier and Mersud Selman, the exhibition explores Roma queer narratives by embodying non-normative narratives and staging voices and bodies, the artists seek to lend legitimacy to the narratives. Together with the vivid images of Béla Váradi's photographs, they allow us to move from individual or autobiographical references to collective biographies and memories. By bringing together narratives, photography, visual and conceptual art, painting and performance, the exhibition proposes a 'utopian hermeneutic' and a language in which the 'queer effect' opens a door to an alternative time and place, in which the negative connotations traditionally associated with Queer and Roma are transformed into a state of liberation.

Curator: Álvaro Garreaud

PROGRAM:

19.00 Opening

19.30 VERONIKA -The true image – Performance by Mersud Selman;

20.30 Rrom Overdrive – Performance by Joy Charpentier;

21.30 Music and drinks on the terrace.

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