

in between, ours

Anthony Cudahy, Chitra Ganesh, Andrea Geyer, Sunil Gupta, Gray Wielebinski

4 May 2021 - 5 June 2021

Hales New York, 547 W 20th Street, New York, NY10011

Hales is delighted to announce *in between, ours* — an exhibition of recent work by five artists from the gallery's roster, including Anthony Cudahy, Chitra Ganesh, Andrea Geyer, Sunil Gupta and Gray Wielebinski. The exhibition centers on works made or revisited across the past year that diversely explore the use of narrative devices in highlighting and shaping the influence and importance of queer spaces in the world. The works draw on the collective potentiality and understanding found in these spaces.

A written piece by Ksenia M. Soboleva entitled *Queer Storytelling and The Narrative Body* accompanies the exhibition. Soboleva is a New York based writer and art historian specializing in queer art and culture. She is currently completing her dissertation on art and lesbian identity during the AIDS crisis (1981-1996) at the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU.

Cudahy's tender paintings reveal the nuanced complexities of life. In masterful compositions he creates a world for unspoken stories, intimate moments and romantic gesture. Devotedly collecting images, Cudahy's archive becomes a site for imagining. In the process of painting, the scenes he creates become less specific to time and place but hint more at the mythical or potential reality. Art historical motifs and symbols reoccur in the works as part of his painterly lexicon and visual shorthand, which he intuitively combines with personal imagery to create complex compositional puzzles. In *seeking a pattern* (2021) Cudahy paints his husband, Ian Lewandowski – a photographer with whom he collaborates and shares ideas with at home and in the studio. Exploring the narrative potential of how the paint is handled, in *seeking a pattern* Cudahy creates a hatched, layered ceiling of thick disorder weighing down on the figure who is focused on the light calm pattern below. By recontextualizing the past and drawing from art history, Cudahy's paintings speak to the continuum of queer experience.

Across a twenty-year practice, Ganesh has developed an expansive body of work rooted in drawing and painting, which has evolved to encompass animations, collages, computer generated imagery, video, and sculpture. In detailed works, Ganesh combines a vast array of influences including South Asian iconography, science fiction and queer theory, with the visual languages of vintage comics, Bollywood posters, and video games. She encourages the viewer to see what was always there — what was once in the 'margins of a mythic history' is brought to the foreground¹. In nonlinear narratives and richly layered visual worlds, Ganesh subverts traditional storytelling to create women and queer centric narratives of the future. *in between, ours* exhibits some of Ganesh's most recent works including *Nightwatcher 1* (2020). Layering gouache, ink and pencil on paper, she creates a luminous, decorative figure on a dark ground. Red acrylic nails frame the woman's naval and from her neck she morphs into tree branches. Surreal and steeped in myth and mystery, Ganesh explores an alternate visual reality for the body.

Geyer's work ranges across multiple media, incorporating text, photography, painting, sculpture, video and performance. Her practice explores the complex politics of time, in the context of specific social and political situations, cultural institutions and historical events. From her early investigations into urban environments, cultural landscapes and notions of citizenship to research into women's contributions to modernism, Geyer's work continuously seeks to create spaces of critical, collective reflection on the construction of histories and ideas that are otherwise marginalized or obscured. *Resonant* (2021) is part of a new body of work that accumulates materials from protests Geyer has participated in since she moved to New York beginning in 1999 with the murder of Amadou Diallo by New York City police, until the present day. The piece engages personal, communal and global protest in response to the daily police

violence that marginalized bodies face. It takes account of the resonance between power and vulnerability, silence and noise, the individual and the collective, as well as past, present and future that the space of protest creates for its participants. The works hold acts of protest coming together across time, Geyer states, 'it takes account of the multitude of bodies in streets creating voice. Layered, persistent.' Nested in a rich and caring surface of wool felt, hung like banners on the wall, each coat of iridescent paint and aluminum leaf reflects and protects, poetically holds each other up in a persistent act of resistance.

Over a career spanning more than four decades, Gupta has maintained a visionary approach to photography, producing bodies of work that are pioneering in their social and political commentary. The artist's diasporic experience of multiple cultures informs a practice dedicated to themes of race, migration and queer identity – his own lived experience a point of departure for photographic projects, born from a desire to see himself and others like him represented in art history. *in between, ours* displays a poignant work from 1983, *Untitled #3 Lake Pichola, Udaipur*. The photograph is from the series *Towards an Indian Gay Image*, created the first time Gupta returned to India as an adult. During this trip he discovered that although homosexuality was still illegal, gay men had a presence, living and existing in plain sight. However, still hidden from mainstream society and unrepresented in the media, Gupta wanted to document displays of queer affection. Looking out at lake at Udaipur, the scene is romantic and open-ended, full of possibility and hope. Gupta notes, 'the landscape in front of the two men is seen as a quintessential paradise. Something that may lie in their future.' The image acts as a quiet testimonial to the existence of gay life in India at a time of societal and political repression. Evocative and nostalgic, the work has been reprinted this year and still many of the same issues remain for the queer community in India.

In Wielebinski's expansive practice, incorporating video, performance, collage, installation, sculpture, and more, they explore the intersections of mythology, identity, gender, nationhood, and memory. Reconfiguring and transforming iconography and visual codes, their work seeks to navigate and question society's frameworks and belief systems. Wielebinski deftly confronts realities in order to imagine and propose alternatives. Mythology weaves a strong thread throughout Wielebinski's works, they draw on both ancient and contemporary myths that exist in our daily lives. In *Last Year's Class* (2021), Wielebinski uses the subject of American football as a vehicle to explore themes of the body, identity and the power dynamics of institutions. Reconfiguring the narrative by collaging clips and creating a new audio sequence, Wielebinski creates tender moments – drawing the viewers' attention to intimate touch, entwined figures and painful expressions. Idealized bodies flash across the screen, young, strong, masculine bodies alongside lingering shots of scarred, sore and bandaged bodies — transforming the visual codes of this mythologized sport. Engaging personally with their own nuanced relationship to masculinity and their body, in *Last Year's Class* Wielebinski asks whose bodies are left behind? There is a system in place that funnels young people into sports — promising a route to acclaim, scholarships and stardom. The work is an institutional critique, highlighting that for schools, colleges, the NFL, and beyond the world of sports, bodies are replaceable, ultimately there will always be next year's class. This work humanizes the players, we see them as children and vulnerable. The historical 1980s footage reinforces the question of where are these children now? We are left to wonder what happened to these bodies and what kind of adults they have become.

[1] Shah, Svati P. (2011) Knowing the Unknowns: The Artwork of Chitra Ganesh, *Feminist Studies* Volume 37 p122

Anthony Cudahy (b.1989 Florida, USA) received a BFA from Pratt Institute, NY in 2011 and completed an MFA at Hunter College, NY in 2020. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Cudahy is exhibiting work with Ian Lewandowski and Kenny Gardner in *It Was Dark in His Arms* at Deli Gallery until May 9. He presented a solo exhibition, *Burn Across the Breeze* at 1969 Gallery, NY in 2021 and has upcoming solo shows at Hales, NY and Semiose Gallery, Paris, France. Previous solo shows include, *Farewell Books* Austin, TX; 1969 Gallery, NY; Cooler Gallery, NY; Mumbo's Outfit, NY; and *The Java Project* in Brooklyn, NY, all USA. He has been in group shows at FLAG Art Foundation, NY, USA; Pratt Institute's Dekalb Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA; Perrotin Gallery, NY, USA; Rude Assembly, Sydney, Australia; Danese/Corey NY, USA; Semiose Gallery, Paris, France; Kapp Kapp, Philadelphia, PA, USA; Half Gallery, NY, USA; Deli Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA; Practice, NY, USA; Harpy Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA; ATHICA, GA, USA; Monya Rowe Gallery, NY; Pale Horse, Mulherin, Toronto, ON, Canada; the Dawn Hunter Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; 68 Projects, Berlin, Germany, among others. His work has also been featured and reviewed in publications including Artforum, W Mag Korea, Brooklyn Rail, The London Magazine, Cultured Mag, Mossless, GAYLETTER, the Paris Review, Hello Mr., Marco Polo Quarterly, and Cakeboy. He is a former resident of the Artha Project, NY, USA. In 2017 Dashwood Books released *Vigil (RHYTHM) Vigil*, a volume of Cudahy's paintings alongside photographs by his husband Ian Lewandowski, which was featured in the *Queering Space* exhibition at Alfred University, NY in 2018.

Chitra Ganesh (b. 1975 Brooklyn, New York, USA) received a BA in Art-Semiotics and Comparative Literature from Brown University, Providence, RI in 1996. She attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2001 and received her MFA in Visual Arts from Columbia University, NY in 2002. She lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, USA.

Ganesh's work has been widely exhibited in the United States and internationally, including solo shows at Brooklyn Museum, NY, USA; MoMA PS1, NY, USA; The Kitchen, NY, USA; The Rubin Museum of Art, NY, USA; The Andy Warhol Museum, PA, USA; Gothenburg Kunsthalle, Sweden; and Times Square, NY, USA. Her work has also been exhibited in important group exhibitions at The Walker Art Center, MN, USA; the Baltimore Museum of Art, MD, USA; The Queens Museum of Art, NY, USA; The Asia Society, NY, USA; The Bronx Museum, NY, USA; The Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX, USA; the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, CA, USA; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, CA, USA; the Boca Raton Museum of Art, LA, USA; the Hayward Gallery, London, UK; Saatchi Museum, London, UK; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Italy; Istituto Valenciano de Arte Moderna, Italy; the ZKM Center for Art and Media, Germany; Göteborgs Konsthall, Germany; Arthotek Kunstverein, Göttingen, Germany; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai, China; the Gwangju Contemporary Arts Centre, Korea; the Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai, India; Indira Ghandi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi, India; Devi Art Foundation, India; the Kochi Biennial, India; the Dhaka Art Summit, Bangladesh among others.

Ganesh's work is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, NY, USA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA, USA; the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, USA; The Brooklyn Museum, NY, USA; The Art Institute of Chicago, IL, USA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; The Ford Foundation, NY, USA; University of Michigan Museum of Art, MI, USA; The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, PA, USA; the Devi Art Foundation, India; Kiran Nadar Museum, Delhi, India; the Saatchi Collection, London, UK; Burger Collection, Hong Kong; Deutsche Bank, among others.

Andrea Geyer (b. 1971, Freiburg, Germany) studied photography and film design at the Fachhochschule Bielefeld and fine art at the Braunschweig University of Art, both in Germany. She is a 2000 graduate of the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program. Geyer lives and works in New York.

Geyer's work has been exhibited widely at institutions including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art,

CA, USA; The Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Artists Space and White Columns, in NY, USA; Contemporary Art Museum Houston, TX, USA; A Space Gallery, Toronto, Canada; KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands; Red Cat and LACE, CA, USA; Tate Modern and Serpentine Gallery, London, UK; Kunstmuseum St.Gallen, Switzerland; Göteborgs Konsthall, Gothenburg, Sweden; Generali Foundation and Secession, Vienna, Austria; Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, Austria; Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Zealand; the Turin Biennale, Italy; the São Paulo Biennial, Brazil; and dOCUMENTA (12), Kassel, Germany. International public collections with Geyer's work include the Museum of Modern Art, NY, USA; the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, USA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA, USA; Museo Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico; Pérez Art Museum Miami, FL, USA; Jewish Museum, NY, USA; Neue Galerie, MHK, Kassel; Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, Austria; and the Federal Collection of Germany.

Sunil Gupta (b. 1953 New Delhi, India) moved to Canada as a teenager in the late 1960s, studying a Bachelor of Commerce at Concordia University, Montreal before moving to New York and enrolling in a photography course at the New School, NY, USA (1976). He went on to receive: a Diploma from West Surrey College of Art & Design, Farnham, Surrey, UK (1981); an MA from Royal College of Art, London, UK (1983); and a PhD from the University of Westminster, London, UK (2019) with a thesis titled "Queer Migrations." Gupta lives and works in London.

Gupta's work is in many public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, NY, USA; Tate Britain, UK; Museum of London, UK; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA, USA; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Japan; the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada; George Eastman Museum, NY, USA; Arts Council, UK; and Harvard University, MA, USA. He has published and edited many books including: Christopher Street (2018); Delhi: Communities of Belonging (2016); Queer (2011); Wish You Were Here (2008); Pictures from Here (2003); Disrupted Borders (1993); Ecstatic Antibodies (1990); and an Economy of Signs (1990). In 1989, Gupta co-founded Autograph – the Association of Black Photographers, and in 1992 he was awarded an INIVA curatorial franchise, the Organisation for Visual Arts (OVA), aimed at promoting a better understanding of culturally diverse visual arts practices. In 2020, Gupta was included in Masculinities: Liberation through Photography – an expansive exhibition at the Barbican, London, UK (2020). Later this year Gupta will be the subject of a major touring retrospective, From Here to Eternity – a collaboration between The Photographers' Gallery, London, UK; and the Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto, Canada.

Gray Wielebinski (b. 1991 Dallas, TX, USA) received a BA from Pomona College, Claremont CA, USA in 2014 before completing an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK in 2018. They live and work in both London, UK and Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Their solo exhibitions include Dark Air, curated by DATEAGLE ART at Seagar Gallery, London (2019); Shaved in Opposite Directions at B. Dewitt Gallery, London, UK (2018); and A Dog Pees On Things For More Than One Reason at Gazelli Art House, London, UK (2018). They have been included in many group exhibitions including, ltd los angeles, LA, USA; Polignano a Mare, Italy; Lychee One Gallery, London, UK; Goswell Road Gallery, Paris, France; Organon, Odense, Denmark; J Hammond Projects, London, UK; Enclave Projects, London, UK; Turf Projects, UK; Good Sport Gallery, London, Ontario, Canada; Toynbee Studios, London, UK; Casa da Dona Laura, Lisbon, Portugal; and Bloomsbury Theatre, London, UK.

Their work has been written about extensively, most notably in Art Maze, It's Nice That, Dazed, Time Out London, AQNB, Coeval Magazine, Ocula Magazine, Something Curated and Hammer Museum Graphite Magazine. Wielebinski's work is in the collections of Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA, USA and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Library & Archives, CA, USA.

This summer Wielebinski will have a solo exhibition at Hales London.