

**THE LESLIE-LOHMAN MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES *DREAMING OF HOME*,
A GROUP EXHIBITION SPARKED BY CATHERINE OPIE'S CAREER-DEFINING IMAGE**

Curated by Gemma Rolls-Bentley, The Exhibition Features 20 International Artists
Examining Various Perspectives of Queer Domesticity

Opening Reception: September 6, 2023; 6-8pm
Exhibition: September 7, 2023 - January 7, 2024



Catherine Opie, *Self-Portrait/Cutting*, 1993. © Catherine Opie, Courtesy Regen Projects, Los Angeles, and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

New York, NY, 2023 - This September, the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art will open *Dreaming of Home*, a group exhibition featuring a line-up of international artists centered around varying notions of queer and trans domesticity. Curated by Gemma Rolls-Bentley, the exhibition takes **Catherine Opie's** 1993 photograph *Self-Portrait/Cutting* as its starting point to highlight the dissonances experienced by queer people in their desires to live and thrive, alongside the routine restrictions imposed by wider society. Marking the 30th anniversary of Opie's seminal work, each featured artist follows in Opie's footsteps by centralizing the queer body in their work as they carve space for themselves and their dreams of home. With a vast range of mediums featured throughout, *Dreaming of Home* engages an intersectional

conversation between artists who each explore their own perspectives and answers to the questions posed by Opie's work: where can queer and trans people feel at home; in our skin, in each other's embrace, among our chosen families? Where are our bodies safe, housed, and free to be themselves? Viewed through a contemporary lens, Opie's image remains relevant in new contexts, representing a radical approach to queer visibility at odds with the mainstream treatment of LGBTQIA+ people at the time of its creation.

Gemma Rolls-Bentley, Curator, commented, "I vividly remember seeing Catherine Opie's photographs when I first moved to London 15 years ago shortly after coming out. Seeing Cathy's images of her community, which reflected how I felt about myself, had a deep impact on me. The critical acclaim and global exhibition of her work seemed to offer not only visibility but an endorsement and space for opportunity that felt at odds with mainstream culture. Cathy's work represents, celebrates, and honours LGBTQIA+ bodies, particularly butch, dyke, trans masc identities, in a way that continues to feel radical, even 30 years later."

Alyssa Nitchun, Executive Director at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, continues, "*Dreaming of Home* uniquely illuminates the heartbeat of Leslie-Lohman's mission -- the thriving of queer lives in public and in private. Opie's work is as visceral and as galvanizing as it was 30 years ago. The exhibition's artists, a global community of queer and trans folks deftly assembled by curator Gemma Rolls-Bentley, magnificently reflect, respond, and forge connections around fundamental concepts of love, kinship, and affirmation."

In addition to Opie's photograph, highlights of the exhibition include artworks by **Clifford Prince King**, **Jenna Gribbon**, and **Sola Olulode**, exploring the notion of home as a safe space for intimacy and solidarity. Additionally, **Cajsa von Zeipel** and **Nicole Eisenman** introduce children into their pseudo-autobiographical artistic realms, at a time when the rights of queer families are being questioned. **Christina Quarles** and **Shadi Al-Atallah**'s paintings capture the intensity and powerful essence of building a queer home and carving space to live freely. **Kudzanai-Violet Hwami** and **Chiffon Thomas** unpack the trappings and limitations placed on queer bodies through childhood experience and memory, while chosen family is celebrated through **Rene Matić**'s queer party scenes and **Leilah Babiye**'s imagined queer clans in defiant reference to the artist's native Uganda. The show also questions the complex relationship between queer bodies and the nurturing qualities of land, as seen in **Ro Robertson** and **Sarah Francis**'s sculptures. **Laurence Philomene**, **Zackary Drucker** and **Amos Mac**, and **Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley** illuminate trans experiences and illustrate the stark contrast between the solace offered by home and the real and urgent dangers of the outside wild. **Whiskey Chow** and **Charmaine Poh**'s photographs and videos investigate the very real human rights restrictions facing LGBTQIA+ people around the world, pointing out how migration is sometimes the only solution to finding a safe, queer home.

On the occasion of the exhibition, the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art will release a limited podcast series titled *Dreaming of Home*, curated by Gemma Rolls-Bentley, which focuses on the themes of a queer home. Additional details and the list of episodes will be available in the coming weeks.

About The Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art

The Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art provides a platform for artistic exploration through multi-faceted queer perspectives. We embrace the power of the arts to inspire, explore, and foster understanding of the rich diversity of LGBTQIA+ experiences. We aim to be a home for queer art, artists, scholars, activists and allies, and a catalyst for discourse on art and queerness. With a collection of over 30,000 objects and a research library of over 3,000 volumes, the Museum fosters experimentation and research through exhibitions, programs, educational platforms, and publications.

Accessibility

The Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art strives to provide a welcoming environment to all visitors. Five external steps lead to our entrance doors: a wheelchair lift is available. All galleries are wheelchair-accessible, and a single-occupancy accessible restroom is located behind the visitor services desk: all restrooms are gender-neutral. Large print didactics are available. Staff will work with individuals and groups who disclose accessibility needs in advance to accommodate them to the best of our ability. Visitors with disabilities and seniors are admitted with their caregiver. The nearest accessible subway station for multiple trains is Broadway-Lafayette St. off the B, D, F, or M trains, approximately .6 of a mile away from the museum. More info on accessible stations can be found [here](#).

For questions or access requests, please email info@leslielohman.org.

Located at 26 Wooster Street in the SoHo neighborhood of New York City. Open Wednesday, 12-5pm, Thursday - Sunday, 12-6 pm. The Museum is a nonprofit organization and is exempt from taxation under section 501(c)3 of the IRS Code.

About Gemma Rolls-Bentley

Gemma Rolls-Bentley has been at the forefront of contemporary art for over a decade, working passionately to champion diversity in the field. Curating exhibitions and building art collections internationally, her curatorial practice amplifies the work of female and queer artists and provides a platform for art that represents and explores LGBTQIA+ identity. Gemma is an advisor to early stage startups, global businesses and cultural projects and she teaches at institutions including the Royal College of Art, Glasgow School of Art and Goldsmiths. She co-chairs the board of trustees for the charity Queercircle and is a member of the Courtauld Association Committee. Most recently she curated The Brighton Beacon Collection, the largest permanent display of queer art in the UK and the inaugural Tom of Finland Art & Culture Festival in London, her debut book 'Queer Art' will be published in 2024 by Frances Lincoln.

LeslieLohman.org

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