

HIGHER PICTURES GENERATION

NEWS RELEASE

Gina Osterloh

Dates: October 10 – December 12, 2020
Opening: October 10, 2020 (noon - 6pm)

Address: 16 Main Street, Ground Floor, Brooklyn, New York, 11201

Higher Pictures Generation presents an exhibition of new work by Gina Osterloh. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Osterloh's photographs explore the relationship between vision, the perception of difference, and selfhood. In response, her work pushes against the camera's readiness to identify and describe its subjects and their surroundings. She obscures figures, camouflages them within their environments, and conflates or replaces them with representational surrogates. Constructing sets and using materials that clearly reflect the hand of the artist, Osterloh inverts the medium's conventions: flattened space is given an off-kilter volume, portraits assert a figure's anonymity, appearance and disappearance fill the same frame.

A series of three portraits show the artist's head and torso nearly entirely obscured by strips of opaque tape. *Shutter Vision* (2020) is a series of purposeful misquotes and negations: of Old Master-style portraiture and lighting, the fetishization of women and fantasy of their availability, and the mechanics of analogue photography (the artist takes the photograph by squeezing the shutter release in her mouth). *Mirror Woman* (2020) and *Obliterate* (2019), one all reflection and other all shadow, confront and complete each other. The tape covering the artist's body deprives us of legibility and our projections of preconceived constructs of identity. The myth of model minority privilege and the notion that our bodies and our borders provide a unified experience of nationality and citizenship, or some measure of protection against the spread of a virus, have been painfully disproven by recent events.

In *Pressing Against Looking, Movement* (2019) Osterloh's emphatic but failed attempt at telescopic sight gives physical shape to vision, the delirious frenzy of looking, and the limitations of both.

Another three images—*Grid, Eyes; Holding Zero; and Holding Zero #2* (all 2020)—are set inside Osterloh's signature rooms constructed from paper, this one delineated by an imperfectly taped out grid. The artist variously appears as a figure almost indistinguishable from the tape that coils around her body or as one free from tape, shielded by and embracing a photographic replica of her mummified body. One room has been emptied of any bodies; in their place appear hundreds of eyes gazing out from within the grid. Camouflage, erasure, assimilation, and replication are recurring themes across Osterloh's work that together question the dynamics of visibility, who is considered alien or outsider, and the hermetic nature of the photograph.

Gina Osterloh (b. 1973) earned her BA from DePaul University in 1996 and her MFA from the University of California, Irvine in 2007. A solo exhibition of her work is scheduled to open at the Columbus Museum of Art in the autumn of 2022. Recent solo exhibitions and performances include *Shadow Woman*, a live performance at The Broad Museum in Los Angeles (2018), and *ZONES* (2018) at Silverlens Gallery in Manila, Philippines. Recent group exhibitions include *An idea of a boundary* (2017) at the San Francisco Arts Commission and *Energy Charge: Connecting to Ana Mendieta* (2016) at the Arizona State University Art Museum. Osterloh is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Art at The Ohio State University.

For more information please contact Marina Chao at marina@higherpicturesgeneration.com.

Next exhibition: *We Wear the Mask* curated by D'Angelo Lovell Williams, December 2020 - January 2021.