

Institute of
Contemporary
University Art
of Pennsylvania

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Five Contemporary Artists Reimagine Everyday Objects through Sculpture and Installation at ICA this Fall

Jes Fan, Nikita Gale, Hannah Levy, Ken Lum, and Oren Pinhassi Probe Boundaries of Domestic Space and the Human Body in “Moveables” Opening August 18



Left: Oren Pinhassi, *Untitled*, 2019. Courtesy of the artist, Helena Anrather, and Commonwealth and Council. Right: Ken Lum, *Trough*, 1986. Installation view, permanent collection, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Gift of Ydessa Hendeles, Toronto, 1993. Courtesy of the artist and National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Philadelphia, PA — July 31, 2023 — This fall, the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania (ICA) presents the group exhibition *Moveables*, which investigates the ways in which the designed environment has the capacity to condition experience, and how artworks can propose new models of “functionality.” *Moveables* brings together the sculptural works of five contemporary artists—Jes Fan, Nikita Gale, Hannah Levy, Ken Lum, and Oren Pinhassi—who rethink the forms of functional design and its intimate relationship to bodies through their multidisciplinary practices. *Moveables* opens at ICA on August 18, 2023, with an artist reception on September 8, and will remain on view through December 17, 2023.

“*Movables* is a prescient thematic exhibition that platforms new and recent work by five distinct artistic voices who are each grappling with the frameworks of our lived environment across media and scales,” said Zoë Ryan, Daniel W. Dietrich, II Director. “It is gratifying to be working with two guest curators on the exhibition—Alex Klein, former ICA senior curator and currently Head Curator and Director of Curatorial

Affairs, The Contemporary Austin, and Cole Akers, Curator and Associate Director of Special Projects, The Glass House —whose visions for this exhibition further our mission and program as a launchpad for innovative artistic experimentation.”

The word “moveables” refers to any article in a building, such as furniture, that is not fixed in place. While originally developed as a legal term to describe property, the word also implies motion and fluidity. The artworks on view—whether they take the form of a sectional sofa, a toothbrush holder, or a chandelier—probe the tension between public and private, real and imaginary, and invite viewers to consider new possibilities for the objects that shape our daily lives. *Moveables* is part of a lineage of ICA exhibitions—from *Improbable Furniture* (1977) to *Ruffneck Constructivists* (2014)—that challenge histories of modernist design to center questions of queer desire, race, class, gender, and ability through a reconsideration of the constructed world around us.

As Klein notes, “The objects that surround us are laden with meaning. This exhibition brings together artists who are keenly attuned to the power structures embedded within objects and create installations and sculptures that reimagine the political, bodily, and aesthetic dimensions of the objects structuring our everyday lives in order to propose alternative possibilities.” Added Akers, “These works, many of which are new or on view for the first time, deconstruct familiar concepts of interior space and address how these spaces reflect larger systems of power.”

Organized as a series of discrete tableaux, or *mise-en-scènes*, the exhibition features each artist’s work sequentially and includes:

- Two new furniture sculptures—including the artist’s first to incorporate a mirror as a *trompe l’oeil* installation element—by **Ken Lum**, known for his use of furniture, mirrors, and photography to address issues of identity, language, and social politics;
- a monumental lighting rig installation by **Nikita Gale** in which theatrical lighting trusses are transformed into sculpture, and programmed lights “dance” to an unheard soundtrack by Tina Turner;
- a new arrangement of sculptures which interrogate architectures of queer desire by **Oren Pinhassi**;
- a group of **Hannah Levy**’s fantastical sculptures that conjure gendered critiques of high modernism with a focus on bodily awareness, alongside the premiere of a new performance; and
- a new video work alongside intimate sculptures by **Jes Fan**, an interdisciplinary artist who explores the intersection of biology and identity.

Exhibition Organization and Credits

Moveables is organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania and co-curated by Alex Klein, Head Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs, The Contemporary Austin, and former Dorothy and Stephen R. Weber (CHE ’60) Senior Curator at ICA, and Cole Akers, Curator and Associate Director of Special Projects, The Glass House.

Support for *Moveables* has been provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art. Additional support has been provided by Danielle M. Anderman, Carol & John Finley, Stacey & Benjamin Frost, Patricia & Howard Silverstein, Meredith & Bryan Verona, Caroline & Daniel Werther, and The Study at University City.

About the Institute of Contemporary Art | University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) at the University of Pennsylvania is a non-collecting institution presenting interdisciplinary exhibitions and programs at the forefront of contemporary practice. Through

its exhibitions, commissions, special projects, publications, and programs, ICA serves as a laboratory for new artistic and curatorial practices, supporting the production of urgent work and providing a critical platform for an exchange of ideas on art and society. Since its founding in 1963, ICA has shared the University's commitment to experimental research and belief in supporting the next generation of imaginative and creative thinkers. ICA is dedicated to advancing new directions in artistic practices, creating meaningful connections for the public with art and artists, and advocating for artists, research, and dialogues that contextualize and resonate with the socio-political conditions of our time.

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