

CLAUDE CAHUN / MARCEL MOORE

12 September

9 November 2024



OPENING: Thursday, September 12th, from 5pm to 8pm

Alberta Pane Gallery is pleased to present *Claude Cahun / Marcel Moore*, its first solo exhibition dedicated to the work of artist Claude Cahun in its Paris venue. Realised on the occasion of the Paris Surréaliste program, organized by the Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'art and the Centre Pompidou around the "Surrealism" exhibition at the Centre Pompidou from September 4, 2024 to January 13, 2025, the exhibition features a selection of photographs and books by the artist and writer.

This is a far-reaching project that aims to highlight the exceptional research of Claude Cahun (born Lucy Schwob), who, along with their life partner and half-sister Marcel Moore (born Suzanne Malherbe), anticipated discussions on subjects of extreme relevance to contemporary society, such as gender and identity.

Cahun was a complex and enigmatic Surrealist artist. They expressed themselves through various media, from photography to collage, writing to sculpture and performance to theatre. As researcher and art critic Silvia Mazzucchelli points out: "Claude Cahun, as a forerunner in rejecting a determined and stable sexuality, may be considered "queer"¹ *avant la lettre*. She had a politically and culturally destabilizing body, consciously removed from the function of reproduction and from the realm of economics. Consistently, she turned towards the sterile myth of the androgynous: a dream, the illusion of divine

self-sufficiency taking material shape in the form of a single body. The androgynous is the image of the fullness of being, the simultaneous presence of the opposing male and female elements. It is the harmony that arises from their mutual equilibrium".²

Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore formed an inseparable duo, both artistically and privately. Working together, the two artists created a world populated by a variety of symbols, producing a poetic and political aesthetic on their own. Their collaboration was so close, particularly in the photographic and theatrical fields, that some researchers have spoken of a fusion between the two artists, "deconstructing the myth of the artistic genius and its unique author".³

For Claude Cahun, Marcel Moore was their "other self", an alter ego and a muse, a profound source of inspiration and an outsider's point of view that enabled her to create "four-handed" works. They complemented each other and merged in their artistic creation, leaving behind hybrid works that are as political as they are intimate.

1: *Queer*: Refers to a person whose sexual orientation or identity does not correspond to the heteronormed social model.

2: Text by Silvia Mazzucchelli for the book *I Owe You - Claude Cahun / Marcel Moore*, Alberta Pane Editions, 2022.

3: Julie Richard, *La création symbiotique de Claude Cahun et Marcel Moore, un espace « Entre-Nous »*, conference proceedings « Parents-elles, compagne de, fille de, soeur de... : les femmes artistes au risque de la parentèle » organised on 23 and 24 September 2016, by Criham (Université de Poitiers), the Musée Sainte-Croix, and Archives of Women Artists, Research and Exhibitions (AWARE).

Dates & Opening hours

12.09.2024 - 09.11.2024
Tuesday - Saturday, 11H - 19H

More information

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CLAUDE CAHUN

Born in 1894 in Nantes, France.

Deceased in 1954 in Saint-Hélier, Jersey, Royaume-Uni.

Topics such as gender and identity, considered of extreme relevance to contemporary society, were anticipated by Surrealist artist Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore, their half-sister and life partner. Photography, writing, collage, sculpture, disguise, transformation, performance and theatre are just some of the various media employed by Claude Cahun in their practice.

Most of their works are in the collections of the Musée d'arts de Nantes (France) and Jersey Heritage (UK).

Recent exhibitions of her work include: *Vital Signs: Artists and the Body*, curators: Lanka Tattersall and Margarita Lizcano Hernandez, MoMA, New York (2024); *MASKS: Multiple Identities from Antiquity to Contemporary Art*, curators: Lorella Scacco, Gösta Serlachius Museum, Mänttä, Finlande (2024); *Surrealism: Le Grand Jeu*, curators: Juri Steiner and Pierre-Henri Foulon, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland (2024); *Beneath this Mask*, Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Abbot Hall, Kendal (2024); *Femme 'n isms, Part II: Flashpoints in Photography*, curator: Sam Adams, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio (2024); *Queer-ish: Photography And The LGBTQ+ Imaginary*, curator: Ken Gonzales-Day, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Claremont, California (2024); *All these fleeting perfections*, curator: Domenico Quaranta, Biblioteca Civica Alberto Geisser, Torino, Italy (2023); *Radical Landscapes: Art inspired by the land*, William Morris Gallery, London (2023); *Fancy Some Friction, Honey?: 33 Years Of Cokkie Snoei's Gallery*, Kunsthal Rotterdam, Rotterdam (2023); *Judy Chicago: Herstory*, curator: Massimiliano Gioni, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2023); *The Milk of Dreams*, 59th Venice Biennale (2022); *I Owe You - Claude Cahun / Marcel Moore*, Alberta Pane Gallery, Venice (2022); *Radical Landscapes*, Tate Liverpool, Royaume-Uni (2022); *Women and Change*, Arken Museum of Modern Art, Ishøj, Danemark (2022); *Claude Cahun : Under the Skin*, Kunsthal Rotterdam (2022) and Cobra Museum Voor Moderne Kunst, Amsterdam (2020); *Alberto Giacometti - André Breton, Amitiés surréalistes*, Institut Giacometti, Paris (2022); *Phantoms of Surrealism*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2021); *Facing Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore*, Ottawa Art Gallery, Canada (2019); *Show Me as I Want to Be Seen*, Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco (2019); *Dancing with myself*, Punta della Dogana, François Pinault Collection, Venice (2018); *Women House : Une exposition collective de femmes artistes*, Monnaie de Paris (2017); *We are Completely Free. Women Artists and Surrealism*, Museo Picasso, Malaga, Spain (2017); *Dreamers Awake*, White Cube, London (2017); *Gillian Wearing et Claude Cahun : Behind the mask, another mask*, National Portrait Gallery, London (2017); *Modern Photographs from the Thomas Walther Collection, 1909-49*, MoMA, Museum of Modern Art, New York (2015); *The Art of Claude Cahun : Entre Nous*, The Art Institute of Chicago (2012); *Claude Cahun, Jeu de Paume*, Paris (2011); *La subversion des images: Surréalisme, photographie, cinéma*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2009), among others.

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Claude Cahun, *Autoportrait aux orchidées*, 1939,
black and white gelatin silver print on Velox paper, 10,2 x 7,8 cm.