

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Linder
Sex-Pol

Blum & Poe, Los Angeles
November 5–December 17, 2022
Opening reception: Saturday, November 5, 6–8pm

Los Angeles, CA, October 26, 2022—Blum & Poe is pleased to present a solo presentation with UK-based artist Linder. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery and her first in Los Angeles in nine years.

Since the 1970s, Linder has made sharp transformations to found images of the sexualized, commodified, and exploited body. For her latest exhibition *Sex-Pol*, titled after a sexual liberation movement helmed by Wilhelm Reich in the 1920s and '30s, Linder constructs her signature photomontages as visual explications of the vast complexities of desire across time and space. This investigation is rooted in distinct thematic universes that the artist philosophically inhabits. In three new series respectively titled *Art and Industry*, *HE Shells*, and *Le Theatre*—she delves into longing and resistance under 1930s fascist rule, previously examined in her works made for David O. Russell's film *Amsterdam* (2022). In another, Linder explores the Ancient Greek concept of Eros as it plays out in contemporary pornography. With other works on view, she amplifies the performative eroticism and body confidence displayed in the stage aesthetic of artistic collaborators—that of Texas-based occult musical artist Rabbit and ballroom influenced multidisciplinary collective the House of Kenzo. The installation unfolds in a color spectrum, which transitions from a silvery black-and-white to vivid hues of green and sienna.

Beginning with less saturation are the photomontages that developed out of her research for *Amsterdam*. While creating much of the artwork shown in Russell's film, Linder ruminated on ways that a member of the fascist resistance in the 1930s might express dissent through visual art. Collecting objects from this period, such as a book documenting the work of dancer and choreographer Mary Wigman, she deployed her signature photomontage interventions to challenge authoritarian systems of power. The resulting series are called *HE Shells*, a military abbreviation for "high explosive shells," and *Art and Industry*, which takes its name from Herbert Read's iconic publication *Art and Industry: The Principles of Industrial Design* (1935). Both groupings take as their base images of bodies in states of languid movement and shades of soft sepia and black-and-white. Linder intervenes by weighing down and disrupting these figures with depictions of mechanisms cut from Read's book and cutouts of seashells. On this process, Linder notes: "For the research for David O. Russell's film, it made sense to create images that would feel relevant to this present moment in time despite using archival prints... I didn't start to work [on this series] until April this year when the war in Ukraine was into its second month. Reports of war crimes against women and girls were beginning to circulate." The *Le Theater* series also channels this world, punning on the daily ins and outs of the operating theater. The theater functions as a container for these series, setting the scene for seemingly surreal abuses of power in the *Amsterdam* universe.

At the exhibition's center, sits Linder's series based on "Book X" of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Here, Linder focuses specifically on the myth of Myrrha, one of the few female figures in mythology to carry the incest motif and often the subject of prints and paintings through art history. Invoking Myrrha's change from woman to tree, Linder intercuts images such that they shift from appropriated pornographic photographs to imagery taken from catalogs on Roman sculpture. One work depicts Myrrha's grandfather Pygmalion, who fell in love with a sculpture of a female form that eventually came to life when Venus granted his

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prayer. Another photomontage, *He is already mine* (2022), depicts Myrrha's son Adonis, conceived with her father.

The photomontage grouping containing *A Dream Between Sleeping and Waking* (2022) draws the viewer into the fantastic world of the Texas underground. Wielding Blackness, queerness, and a true talent across mediums—performance, music, and digital art being a few—the House of Kenzo and Rabbit seek to dismantle oppressive systems in Texas and beyond. Collaborating on work for this exhibition as well as the most recent issue of *Lampoon* magazine, Linder contrasts imagery of the collective and Rabbit's powerful presence with that of domestic objects to criticize mainstream representations of bodies and gender. This furthers the work that Linder has been making since the 1970s, using pop culture and the domiciliary to call attention to the narrow portrayals of womxn in the media. *Sex-Pol* continues in the garden gallery with two looping art films expanding on concepts in Linder's photomontage series with Rabbit and the House of Kenzo. The first is Linder's *A dream between waking and sleeping* (2022), commissioned by The Charleston Trust, home of the painters Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, soundtrack by Maxwell Sterling. The second, *Angelica / Safe* (2022), features a soundtrack by Maxwell Sterling and Rabbit; it is Rabbit's collaboration with Denver Bastion and Chicago-based performance art collective Suspended Culture.

Alongside the exhibition, Linder will release two limited edition giclée prints, with all proceeds donated to The Afiya Center (TAC) in Dallas, Texas. The only reproductive justice organization in North Texas founded and directed by Black womxn, TAC works to ensure all Black birthing folx have the right to parent or not parent and to choose, when, where, and how they want to birth. One of these prints is a collaborative work by Linder, BREXITT, and Rabbit.

Linder's (b. 1954, Liverpool, UK) work has been exhibited widely, including by way of two traveling retrospectives: *Linderism* at Hatton Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK and Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, UK (2020); and *Femme/objet* at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France and Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, Germany (2013). Solo exhibitions include Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, UK (2018); Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK (2018); Art On The Underground, London, UK (2018); Glasgow Women's Library, Glasgow, Scotland (2018); Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, CA (2013); Tate St. Ives, Cornwall, UK (2013); Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2007); and MoMA PS1, New York, NY (2007). In 2021, Linder's work was presented in the Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool, UK. Her work has been documented in five dedicated monographs.

About Blum & Poe

Blum & Poe was founded by Tim Blum and Jeff Poe in Santa Monica in September of 1994 as a space to show local and international contemporary art in all media. Blum's extensive experience in the Japanese art world combined with Poe's keen knowledge of emerging artists in Los Angeles resulted in an international program of influential artists. Throughout a twenty-seven-year history, Blum & Poe has shaped the trajectory of contemporary art by championing artists at all stages of their careers—cultivating the lineages that run between emerging and established practices and working with artist estates to generate new discourse surrounding historical work. Currently, Blum & Poe represents fifty-one artists and nine estates from sixteen countries worldwide.

In 2003 the gallery moved to a larger space in Culver City, and in 2009 Blum & Poe purchased and renovated its current 22,000-square-foot complex on La Cienega Boulevard. In this location the gallery has since staged museum-caliber surveys, examining the historical work of such movements as the Japanese

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Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of 1980s and '90s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); and a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020). To produce these exhibitions, Blum & Poe has worked with celebrated curators such as Alison M. Gingeras, Sofia Gotti, Joan Kee, and Mika Yoshitake.

In 2014, Blum & Poe opened galleries in New York and Tokyo to focus on intimately scaled projects in new contexts. These expansions tie into the gallery's wide-reaching program that includes exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. Blum & Poe's publishing division democratically circulates its program through original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, to artists' books. In 2020, the gallery launched Blum & Poe Broadcasts, an online platform showcasing artists' projects in conjunction with physical installations or as standalone digital endeavors.


Across the three global locations, Blum & Poe prioritizes environmental and community stewardship in all operations. In 2015, Blum & Poe was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery in Los Angeles and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. The gallery is also a member of the Gallery Climate Coalition, which works to facilitate a more sustainable commercial art world and reduce the industry's collective carbon footprint. Blum & Poe is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable communities both in their physical and online spaces and believes that everybody should have equal access to creating and engaging with contemporary art.

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