

Petzel

NIKITA GALE ***NOSEBLEED***

May 2 – June 8, 2024

520 W 25th Street

Petzel is pleased to present *NOSEBLEED*, featuring the work of Los Angeles-based artist Nikita Gale. The show marks Gale's debut solo exhibition with the gallery, and will be on view from May 2 to June 8, 2024, at Petzel's Chelsea location at 520 West 25th Street. *NOSEBLEED* expands Gale's ongoing research on live performance, considering the spatial, social, and embodied phenomenon that occur within large-scale venues of spectacle.

In *NOSEBLEED*, the artist reconsiders this most high and far seating section, situating the viewer in an elevated, aerial perspective, from which the spectator can observe both the field of play and the crowd of neighboring onlookers. The so-called "worst seat in the house," the artist challenges the equation of nosebleed-tier distance with disadvantage, creating a space at once above and among the action.

Encountering the installation, the viewer is confronted by the nosebleed vantage point of a stadium beneath their feet, the panoramic image blanketing the gallery floor. Reproduced on vinyl, figures with arms raised foreground a blurred sea of bodies, cresting fields of light and shadow. Mounted at an angle, a mirrored surface reflects the warped image onto the audience. The spectator floats above, stepping about and around various photographic works and sculptures, while stage lights affixed to a floor-to-ceiling truss illuminate the space. Gale encloses the audience in a distorted arena, in which the structural and atmospheric aspects of the stadium are superimposed under, above, and back onto the observer.

Gale's walls are left completely bare, redirecting the viewer's gaze downward. Arranged atop the vinyl floor, the artist presents four deconstructed architectural models of stadiums. Using composite 3-d printed models, broken apart by hand and reconfigured in different orientations, the sculptures draw on both existing and unrealized projects. Two failed architectural plans, the Deutsches Stadion designed by Albert Speer and the Theatre of the Masses designed by Gaetano Ciocca, are cited. Real elements are composed from Madison Square Garden and Manchester Arena, both in-operation large-scale entertainment complexes.

In addition to the models, Gale presents various mixed media and photographic works placed atop the vinyl floor. The artist debuts a new series of velvet on aluminum works, evocative of stage curtains, positing the space in a lexicon of theater. A new series of photographic images are similarly arranged on the ground. Comprised of both camera-less and camera-produced images, Gale's subjects vary: an ear, an open mouth, a packed stadium, an empty grave, a copper mine, a tunnel from a Carrara marble quarry. Bearing roads, folds, seats, and teeth, Gale's images spiral, sink into the floor. The viewer might find a mouth open to sing, or scream, at a concert. The copper mine might resemble a stadium, where the labor of performers is likewise extracted. The audience might look down at a body in a stadium, but also from the edge of a grave.

Through *NOSEBLEED*, Gale presents an uneasy social arena, refracting the spectacle of performance and visibility onto the audience. Privileging the nosebleed perspective, wrought with culturally stratified ways of seeing and being seen, the artist considers the stadium as both a site of heightened connection and amplified vulnerability. How are anxieties and desires expressed through collective ritual, among others in crowded amphitheaters, among ourselves in our own bodies?

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About Nikita Gale

Nikita Gale (b. 1983 Anchorage, Alaska) is an artist living and working in Los Angeles, California and holds a BA in Anthropology with an emphasis in Archaeological Studies from Yale University and earned an MFA in New Genres at UCLA.

Gale's work explores the relationship between materials, power, and attention. A key tenet of the artist's practice is that the structures that shape attention determine who or what is seen, heard, recorded, remembered, and believed.

Gale's practice examines the ways in which silence, noise, and visibility function as political positions and conditions. Gale's broad-ranging installations – often comprising concrete, barricades, video and automated sound and lighting – blur formal and disciplinary boundaries, engaging with concerns of mediation and automation in contemporary performance. By approaching reproduction as a mechanism that connects humans to a desire for extension and amplification through both biological and industrial processes, the artist's work points to the ways that technology not only functions as an extension and amplification of the body but also as a means by which labor and violence are displaced and concentrated.

The artist's work has recently been exhibited at Tate Modern (London), Chisenhale (London); LAXART (Los Angeles); 52 Walker (New York); MoMA PS1 (New York); Kunstraum Kreuzberg (Berlin); Swiss Institute (New York); California African American Museum (Los Angeles); The Studio Museum in Harlem (New York); and in "Whitney Biennial 2024: Even Better Than the Real Thing" at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York) and "Made in L.A. 2018" at the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles).

The artist's work is included in the collections at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California; Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts; Pérez Art Museum, Museum Miami (PAMM), Miami, Florida; The Studio Museum, Harlem, New York; and Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom.

Petzel Gallery is located at 520 West 25th Street New York, NY 10001. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM. For press inquiries, please contact Hanna Andrews at hanna@petzel.com, or call (212) 680-9467.