



Art League Houston
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For Immediate Release

Cuir
Moe Penders

Exhibition Dates: December 16, 2022 – February 11, 2023
Opening Reception: 6 – 8 PM Friday, December 16, 2022
Artist Talks: 2 - 4 PM Saturday, December 17, 2022
Front Gallery



Moe Penders, *Mariposa*, Large Format Film Scan, 2020. Image courtesy of the Artist

December 6, 2022 Houston, TX - Art League Houston (ALH) is proud to present *Cuir*, an installation of work by artist Moe Penders, who is based in San Diego, California. ***Cuir* is an introspective dialogue around queer and trans narratives in the context of queer politics, war politics, and imposed heteronormativity.** The term *cuir* is 'queer' in Spanish, taking its pronunciation from queer. In the Spanish language, vocabulary is



gendered, creating conflict with Pender's non-binary identity. The creation of this work began in 2020, focusing on the areas of Kushkatan, now known as El Salvador, and the occupied territories of Turtle Island, a name for the lands now known as North and Central America. *Cuir* is a dialogue around transness, translation, and migration between Kushkatan (El Salvador), Karankawa (Houston), and Kumeyaa (San Diego).

The work in the exhibition explores Pender's relationship with the in-between by connecting facets of war and displacement in El Salvador, transness, and experiences of existing in different spaces that border these liminal zones. It looks at situations through lenses of categorization of social class, race and colorism, gender, and religion. Penders' queerness is invalidated by both their biological family and home country.

The works are created from large format film cameras, creating life-size prints that invite the viewer to be aware of queer bodies in the American South and El Salvador. Photography allows Penders to situate themselves between countries, genders, and languages. *Cuir* centers the trans narrative through a dialogue about translation, the in-between, generational trauma, and heteronormativity. This body of work focuses on the haves and have-nots, creating metaphorical visibility through language. The series also looks at the impact of war, borders, and the effects on communities across generations through violence, poverty, and generational trauma. Penders also explores the idea of traveling between borders and binaries, directly impacted by their time in Houston and San Diego, which borders Tijuana, Mexico.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Moe Penders is a Salvadoran artist, whose practice is centered in traditional photography. They moved to Houston in 2009 to attend the University of Houston where they received their BFA in Photography and Digital Media and are currently in UC San Diego getting their MFA. Their work explores the social construction of home, intersectionality of identity, and gender expression. Penders is interested in conversations that touch upon different social aspects which are relevant to their life and experiences.

For more information, visit www.artleaguehouston.org, or contact Bridget Bray, Interim Director of Exhibitions and Curatorial Projects, at bridget@artleaguehouston.org or 713-523-9530.

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