

GALLERIE B.B.

840 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, CO 80204



ORCHID.Spring by **MATTHEW MORROCCO**

Curated by Sophie Olympia Riese/
The Olympia Project

April 19 - June 15, 2019

Please see The Olympia Project website,
sophieolympia.com for an up-to-date event schedule

#orchidspring

Gallerie B.B. and The Olympia Project are pleased to present *ORCHID.Spring*, a new body of work by artist Matthew Morrocco. This work explores the interrelationship between the human and natural worlds. In each photograph, a purple figure--the artist himself dressed in a full-color bodysuit--poses within an enormous

cluster of blooming Sakura trees. Morrocco tries to merge his body with the landscape, bending his arms to mimic the drape of a tree branch or, in one image, only half-emerging from a burst of sakura blossoms. Looking at these photographs, the viewer finds herself haunted by a familiar uneasiness. The centrality of Morrocco to every composition, the way his hiding only draws the viewer's attention, captures how human beings have remade the earth in their own anthropocentric image. We live in a time in which we increasingly realize how the natural world--even its most remote corners, whether the deep sea or the rainforest--has been forever altered by human actions. Even natural spaces that appear untouched have often sustained heavy contact with the human--supposedly authentic experiences with "nature" have, more often than not, been extensively curated and anthropocentrized before the arrival of the newest human individual. Embodying this reality, Morrocco's anonymous figure--mostly stripped of, age, race, and almost all of the categories central to human identity--filters the eye away from the breath-taking Sakura trees. At first, locating and studying the figure at the center of the images elicits pleasure--on second and third viewings, he begins to feel inescapable.

Spring shows the Sakura trees at a point in their lifecycle when they are most vulnerable and yet the most triumphant--they burst forth with unrepentant candor. While it may seem as though these trees are hardy, their presence is actually very delicate. The trees only bloom for a few weeks before the petals fall from the trees and decay on the ground. But in that time, bees work to pollinate the blossoms, which in turn creates more trees, more flowers, and more visual delight. As opposed to the sustainable cycle of the Sakura trees, human industry and cultivation have already pushed global warming beyond the threshold of no return, the US has pulled out of the Paris Agreement, and yet still, somehow, the environmental crisis is not the center of our attention. In making images that model the problematic centrality of the human in even the most serene natural spaces, this project seeks to bring the problematic anthropocentrism to the fore--the desire to see the Sakura trees without the omnipresent purple figure catalyzes our better impulses toward a more intimate coexistence.

This series forms one part of a larger body of work, *ORCHID.Seasons*, that will explore this concept across different landscapes and seasons.

About the artist:

Matthew Morrocco is an artist working in photography and installation. He holds a BA from NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study and an MFA from Columbia University. His work has received grant support from the New York Foundation of the Arts, a blade of grass, NYU, and Columbia University. Recent exhibitions include *Complicit* at NYU's Gallatin Gallery, NY, and *ORCHID.rgb* at Pioneer Works, NY. His book, *Complicit*, was published in September, 2018 with Matte Editions.

About the curator:

Sophie Olympia Riese is an independent curator whose primary interest is in providing a platform for the stories and work of emerging artists who are engaging with historically overlooked and occasionally discomfiting narratives. Her work seeks to promote an egalitarian view into the art world, making it accessible for artists and audience members alike who may have typically been excluded. Primary is the development of a conversation about the world as it is versus the world as it should be, and how current political, social, and economic conditions and considerations play into an artist's ability to create and engage.

She was a co-founder of SECRET DUNGEON, a curatorial collective based in Bushwick, Brooklyn, that from 2016 to 2018 offered idiosyncratic programming intended to provide a conversational platform for artists whose work may not have been given an alternative outlet in the New York art market. Past projects include *The Ties that Bind, Bend, Break* and *TENSE* at SECRET DUNGEON, and *Mdingi Coutts* at Pitti Uomo 89. She is a trustee of the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), a founding member of the Brooklyn Museum's Young Leadership Council, and a patron of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver.

About the gallery:

GALLERIE B.B. @BORGIA, INC. are proud to represent the Contemporary Fine Art of the NEW American West. A selection of the exhibition programming in the gallery is devoted to recognizing contemporary art unique to Denver and the West. The focus on the four seasons and the photographs by MORROCCO which document the unparalleled, delicate beauty of SPRING, are distinctly reminiscent of the spontaneity and vivacious culture omnipresent in the Contemporary American West. The GALLERIE B.B.@BORGIA, INC. Collection also includes Southwest Modernism, Ceramics, Contemporary Native, Modern Masters, Lithographs by Pablo Picasso, Italian Contemporary Fine Art and Photography.

ORCHID.SPRING by MATTHEW MORROCCO, at NEW ART NOW, is part THREE of FOUR of an ongoing exhibition of new photographic work by the artist MATTHEW MORROCCO documenting the FOUR SEASONS. ORCHID.SPRING: MATTHEW MORROCCO is hosted by GALLERIE B.B.@BORGIA, INC. in the Art District on Santa Fe Drive. ORCHID.SPRING was curated by Sophie O. Riese. ORCHID.FALL and ORCHID.WINTER were both shown at Crush Curatorial in NYC, NY.