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MUSEUM

First New York Solo Exhibition of Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo) Considers Daily Existence as a Form of Endurance Performance

**“Nothing New” Opens at the New Museum on October 12,
2023, Alongside “Judy Chicago: Herstory”**



New York, NY (September 14, 2023)—The New Museum presents the first New York solo exhibition of conceptual and performance artist Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo (b. 1989, Dallas, Texas), widely known by the moniker Puppies Puppies. On view October 12, 2023, through January 14, 2024, “Nothing New” transforms the New Museum’s glass-walled Lobby Gallery into a mise-en-scène for Kuriki-Olivo’s daily life, with a portion of the space functioning as a duplicate of the artist’s actual bedroom. Using a fogging glass mechanism, Puppies Puppies will alternately obscure and reveal her activities in the gallery to visitors, foregrounding themes of visibility, representation, and cultural consumption.

Kuriki-Olivo expands on contemporary ideas around the readymade by imbuing ubiquitous and everyday objects, signifiers, and actions with a personal and political charge. She has, for example, reconfigured antibacterial gel dispensers, toilet bowl liquid, and the color green—as well as the acts of sleeping, peeing, and taking a pill—in installations and performances that question ableist frameworks of artistic and capitalist production. Many of Puppies Puppies' exhibitions have also included actionable components: a GoFundMe to support a friend's transition fund; free HIV testing and counseling; a working shower available for use by the public. Kuriki-Olivo thus asserts that life can be viewed as its own form of endurance practice, especially for those whose very survival is at stake, including trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming people of color.

Much of Puppies Puppies' past work has also centered around a refusal to be seen. She has used proxies to speak or act on her behalf during studio visits, interviews, and performances; donned costumes that function as avatars, dressing as SpongeBob, a Minion, Gollum, Freddy Krueger, and Lady Liberty; and staged performances in absentia. "Nothing New" marks an important shift in the artist's practice, exploring new registers of transparency and obfuscation by inviting visitors to experience Kuriki-Olivo's life as if through a screen.

Cameras will film the artist as she navigates between the New Museum, her Lower East Side apartment, and her day-to-day life in the city, with live footage broadcast onto monitors at the Museum. By engaging with contemporary modes of surveillance in both their self-enacted and nonconsensual manifestations, Puppies Puppies blurs the boundaries between her public and private life while also destabilizing the distinctions between URL and IRL existence. Using the heightened setting of the museum space, "Nothing New" considers how camming, chatrooms, social media, and other forms of online surveillance and display can be tools of connection and survival that also risk producing new forms of exploitation and control. "Nothing New" thus establishes a reflection on the art world's power dynamics and financial structures and the ways in which they mirror those of sex work, as well as other modes of connection that emerge via the internet and in real life.

Visible through the glass wall of the Lobby Gallery, a reproduction of Kuriki-Olivo's bedroom will be flanked by two additional vignettes revealing aspects of her familial heritage and interior world. On one side, a Torii gate and a scaled-down recreation of the garden at Ryōan-ji Temple in Kyoto delineate the entrance into a sacred space. On the other, MRI scans of the artist's brain accompany a small hemp growing station relating to her use of CBD to prevent seizures during treatment and recovery from a brain tumor, as well as the broader mental health benefits of regular cannabis use for, in her words, "a trans woman navigating this world." By allowing a spectacularized view into her daily existence and elements of her personal history, Kuriki-Olivo asserts the nuanced layers of her own identity, eliding tokenization and reductive narratives of racial and trans identities.

"Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo): Nothing New" is curated by Vivian Crockett, Curator, with Ian Wallace, Curatorial Assistant.