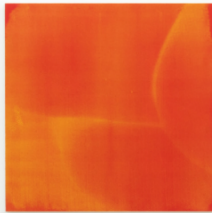


disquiet.

# CANDY FACTORY



DALLAS, TEXAS

ARTIST COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE LATE  
GENESIS P-ORRIDGE AND ERIC HEIST

*journalist K. Day Gomez*

In a gallery press statement, “Keijsers Koning is pleased to present “Candy Factory” an exhibition based on the collaboration between the late Genesis P-Orridge and Eric Heist. On view will be sugar-coated silkscreen paintings. The abstract composition is based on parts of the human figure without distinct identity or gender identification, yet the imagery is recognizable and desirable.”

According to gallerist Bart Keijsers Koning, this two-artist collaboration began in 2000 with a presentation at Team, “a renowned and provocative New York gallery that closed its doors in 2020. Genesis P-Orridge was generally known as a maverick within experimental music industry and searcher for a new cultural zeitgeist. This exhibition was one of the first entrances to the art world. Until then, most encounters with the art world had been of a performative nature rather than plastic, with showings through art troupe COUM Transmissions and their retrospective at the ICA (London) as far back as 1976.” Clearly ahead of their time, this was an era of experimentation and exploration of what art perceivably is versus what art could be.

“Around 2000, Heist was creating sugar-coated silkscreen paintings of body-related imagery. P-Orridge was making photographic images of non-gender-specific bodies. Both Heist and P-Orridge were looking at fringes of culture and had a shared interest of context through images that transcended class and moved the narrative past distinctions of identity and its relation to gender.” It’s a topic very commonplace in our time now, that would have been seen as taboo, even threatening or offensive by the mainstream in the ‘70’s when their art journey began.

“The result is Candy Factory : pop-infused images and bodies without sex, age, class or race—a symbol for the one as well as the multiple. The name for the project combines Candy Darling and Factory Records, an overlap between art and music.”

Here’s where we get into the technical process. “The duo revisited their collaboration in 2018 and created a set of thirty 22-inch square silkscreen on canvas panels. The imagery was derived from a Polaroid image of non-distinct nudity. A base color, which was one of the six primary and secondary colors (red, violet, blue, green, yellow, orange) was overlaid with the image using the five remaining colors in



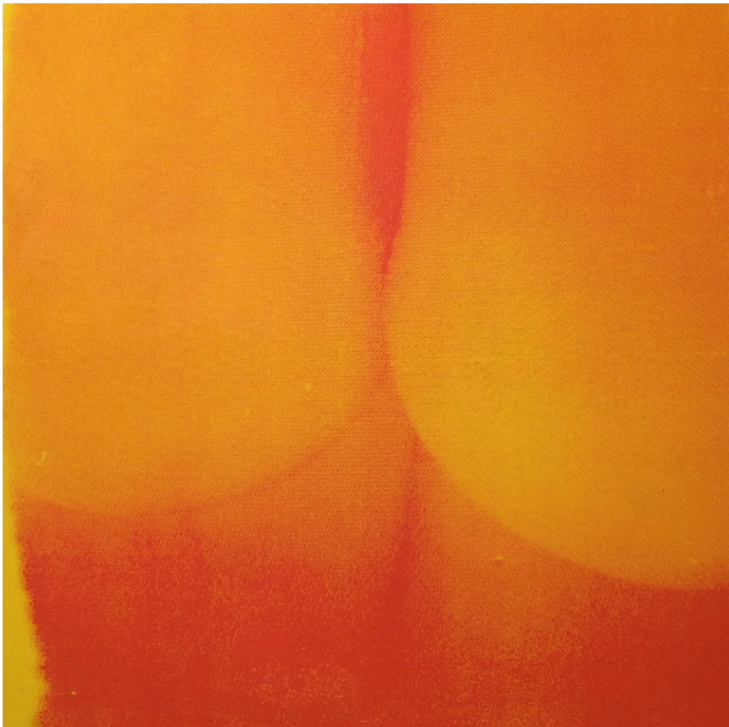
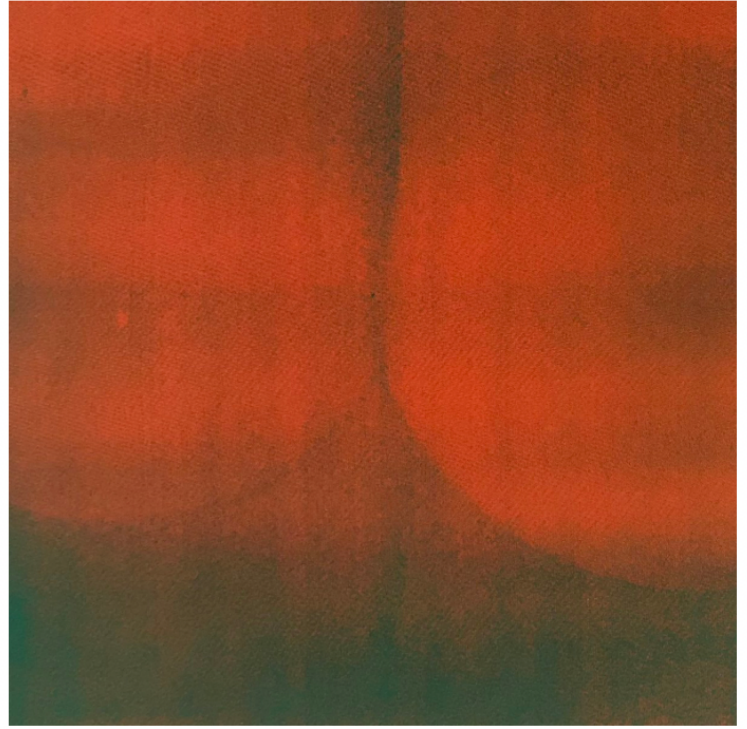
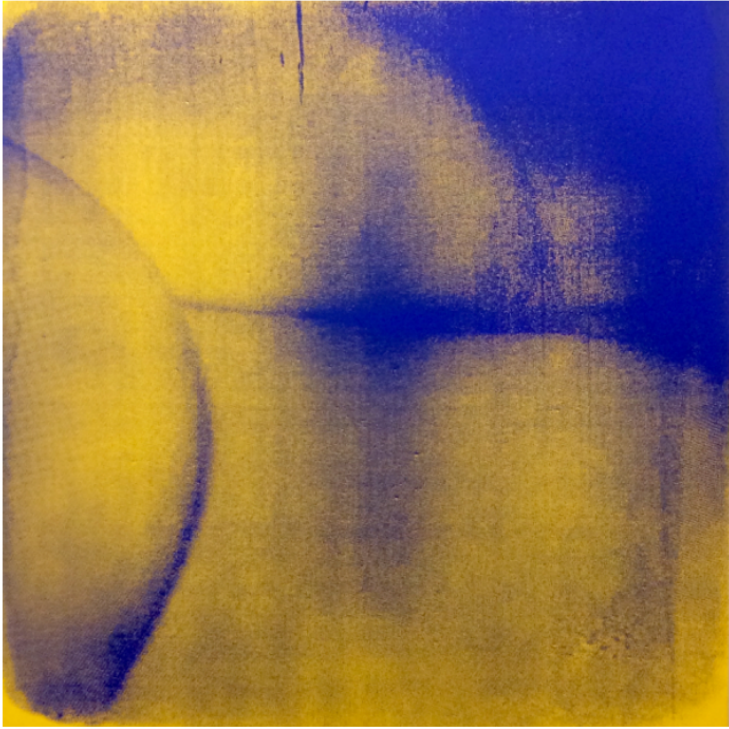
sequence of the color wheel. The process became a performative ritual in which other sets of sequential color and rotation of imagery suggests cyclical movement and continuity within the attraction of bodies to one another. The images and works in this installation all simultaneously exist independently and collectively.”

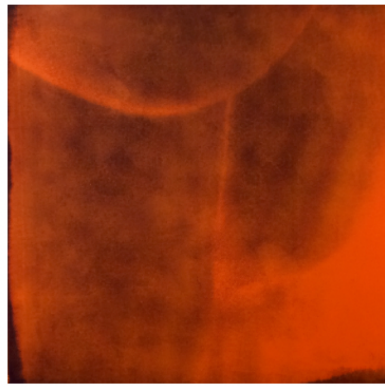
As contemporary art goes, the work is playful but carries an important cultural point. “In the final exchange of text messages between Genesis and Heist, s/he texted in her unique manner : “Spending 5 Daze in the Horse Pistol – Butter Coum to the Nest” (spending five days in the hospital but come to my apartment afterwards). The continuity of Candy Factory—rotating, changing, moving from red to yellow to blue and back again—follows the continuity of existence itself, reassuring that death is not an end.”

During this particular Dallas, Texas exhibition, Keijsers Koning tells us, “Alongside the Candy Factory works, the viewer can see P-Orridge’s video Pandrogeny Manifesto, 2006. The work suggests that while some feel trapped in the “wrong” body, there are others, namely Breyer P-Orridge, who just feel trapped in a body.”

As Genesis told to Them in a 2019 interview: “We thought : well, what happens if we cut ourselves up and become one? Can we become a third being? And that’s the pandrogynne. It began as an expression of unlimited love, but then became research into why we feel this way, and what it implies about our position in society.”

Obviously, this inclusive forward-thinking exhibit falls directly under the PEPPER umbrella of topics which are meant to spark conversation and foster understanding. The deep red south, however, seems to be stuck in its traditional fear of all things new or outside of cookie-cutter culture. In so many ways, marginalized communities are still not welcome or





understood here. When first we spoke, Keijsers Koning told us, “You may find it funny that [a local] Dallas news outlet was set to write about it, with writer prepped and everything on track—only to be pulled by the main editor who stated it “didn’t possess the family values they want”.” One can assume they don’t even realize how offensive that statement is—after all, the ‘American family’ on whole is not what it used to be and generally (thanks to the age of information) folks are a lot more progressive than the media gives them credit for.

“It’s not just about me,” Keijsers Koning continued, “but rather a trend. I notice that a lot of people are too scared or complacent to stand up and adjust the rudder. Why would we let ourselves be lead by buffoons when by and large we can find common ground?”

My reaction is also fueled by a recent visit I had with university students and hearing the rocks they had to crawl out from under. My conversations just lead their brains to an area they have never seen or been to. Just free to think and motivate; it wasn’t ignorance but sheer repression. I’ve not seen anything like it.” It’s important that we hold these conversations if we intend to evolve along with the rest of the outside world.

About this exhibition, “The work is a collaboration between Genesis and Eric as they did find themselves on a similar platform in 2000. They both questioned the limits of body, attraction and assumption. This exhibition is their last project together as Genesis passed in 2020.” We’re hoping to showcase many more intersectional features from the art world that promote these kinds of conversations and encourage our readers to learn more about the great wide beautiful spectrum of gender identity and orientation. And to the southern media outlets still afraid to share the stories of the human beings who exist in their orbit, there is hope for you yet. We’re happy to lead by example. This is how you uplift your community.

## artist bios

Eric Heist (b. 1962) is an artist who works in multiple media imaging the complexities of power, time and socio-political contradictions. Recent solo or two-person exhibitions include Kanal-Centre Pompidou (Brussels); Field Projects (New York); Galveston Artist Residency (Galveston, TX); Foundations, Schroeder Romero/Shredder (New York). His work has been included in exhibitions at Participant, Inc., Max Protetch, Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, White Columns, Roebing Hall, NY, Elizabeth Vallaix Gallery, Paris, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, amongst others. He is a founder and director of Momenta Art since 1986, a not-for-profit exhibition organization. His work has been reviewed by Holland Cotter and Roberta Smith of the New York Times, William Powhida in The Brooklyn Rail, and Christian Viveros-Fauné in Art in America, among others. He received a Pollock Krasner Award in 2020.

Genesis BREYER P-ORRIDGE (Manchester, England, 1950—2020) was a legendary singer-songwriter, musician, writer, occultist, cultural engineer, and visual artist. P-Orridge rose to notoriety as the founder of the COUM Transmissions art collective, which operated in Britain from 1969 to 1976. P-Orridge co-founded and fronted the pioneering industrial band Throbbing Gristle and the experimental multi-media outfit Psychic TV, paralleled by P-Orridge’s co-founding of the communal network Temple ov Psychick Youth. In 1993, P-Orridge and partner Lady Jaye embarked on the Pandrogeny Project, a living art concept that blended physical and psychological mediums testing gender constructs and creating the unified BREYER P-ORRIDGE. The archives of Genesis P-Orridge were acquired for the permanent collection of London’s Tate Britain in 2010. Institutional solo exhibitions include ICA, London; The Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Summerhall, Edinburgh; The Rubin Museum, New York; KANAL-Centre Pompidou, Brussels.

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