

## Press Release Winter 2020



# NADIA LEE COHEN NOT A RETROSPECTIVE

Centro Niemeyer, Avilés  
January 17 to March 29, 2020

Curated by Mario Martín Pareja



Barb © Nadia Lee Cohen



**Niemeyer Center presents the big solo show of the photographer Nadia Lee Cohen which includes over fifty varying photographs.**



Nadia Lee Cohen © Nadia Lee Cohen

*When you look at Cohen's works, you see this magical blackhole that includes everything from Stanley Kubrick to Cindy Sherman. These works with their saturated colors, surreal yet often macabre touches and unusual characters create a new base for the perfect representation of how millennials view the world today: a dreamscape of opportunities with a potential touch of nightmare in politically, socially and economically problematic times.*

*In the context of fashion where we finally enjoy combined mens and womens shows and where we see inclusive castings represent more of us on the runways, Nadia's anachronistic eclecticism of talents and references is a breath of fresh air. Not only she is deemed to be the new girl in town who will immortalize*

*many faces and trends onto her iconic images for our ever-scrolling generation but also the role model for those polymaths who find it hard to fit into one category. We can't help but wonder as we lose ourselves into Cohen's imaginarium: are we experiencing a historical moment in photography where we witness emergence of one of future's most eclectic talents?*

**Yigit Turhan**

# NADIA LEE COHEN. NOT A RETROSPECTIVE

Niemeyer Center presents the big solo exhibition of the photographer Nadia Lee Cohen. An artist internationally acclaimed by public and critics since her inclusion in the prestigious Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize in 2012; where her work was on show at the National Portrait Gallery in London.

Nadia Lee Cohen (United Kingdom, 1990) is a photographer, filmmaker and self-portrait artist based in Los Angeles (USA), a city that has inspired her since her first trip in 2014; and that feeds her endless fascination with Americana and conventional life in suburbia. It is, precisely the concept of perfect life commonly portrayed in those residential areas that present optimal opportunity for Nadia to puncture such perceptions. She documents narratives inside those houses in which the female protagonists challenge the unbearable complacency towards sexual escapism, and outside, where the backgrounds of her cameos incorporating bright signage and pop culture inject cultural references to her narrative.

At first glance the photographs are eye-catching, glamorous and filled with saturated colour, yet on closer inspection some might detect a melancholy element. It is precisely this juxtaposition that interests Nadia and informs much of her work. Although expressing no taboos, Nadia prefers a more subtle approach rather than creating images that aim to shock the viewer. That way, she encourages her audience to absorb and contemplate the narrative behind the image that appears before their eyes.

Her images blur the boundaries between fantasy and reality, the animate and the inanimate, challenging logic with a touch of irony and humour. Nothing is what it seems. Nadia strives to construct discernible settings onto which she then adds an element that distorts the familiarity, suggesting that something is not quite what it seems. Consequently, this changes the mood to that which is more sombre and disturbing, testing the viewer's sense of certainty and encouraging them to linger a little longer.

In these fictional situations and central to this iconographic universe are her female protagonists. Within each photograph her models transcend into the role of actors as they portray the respective characters



Sarah and Friends © Nadia Lee Cohen



Miriam © Nadia Lee Cohen



Marianne © Nadia Lee Cohen



Marianne Still Life © Nadia Lee Cohen



Jessica © Nadia Lee Cohen

assigned to them. Nadia favours casting real people rather than agency models; bold, sensual and surreal with characterful features that, at times, transcend conventional beauty ideals.

There is a strong fashion element within her work attributable principally to her London College of Fashion education; and work within the world of fashion. However, she states that her inspiration stems predominantly from cinema; i.e Alfred Hitchcock, John Waters, Stanley Kubrick and the Coen brothers and cinematic photography –William Eggleston, Philip Lorca DiCorcia, Cindy Sherman and Larry Sultan...

The show includes over fifty varying photographs produced over these years.

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*Anything focusing around suburbia with dark undertones usually has me sold.*

**Nadia Lee Cohen**

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Bethan Close © Nadia Lee Cohen



Vons © Nadia Lee COhen



Pippa © Nadia Lee Cohen



Miriam with Gun © Nadia Lee Cohen

## NADIA LEE COHEN

Nadia Lee Cohen (United Kingdom) is a British photographer, filmmaker and self portrait artist based in Los Angeles (USA). In 2011 Lee Cohen attended the London College of Fashion and began studying photography. In 2012 she was included in the prestigious Taylor Wessing Portrait prize and exhibited her work in the National Portrait Gallery in London. In addition to her personal artwork, she has created commercial work for companies and publications such as Miu Miu, Adidas, MAC Cosmetics and many more. She has created music videos and short films with celebrities such as Sofia Loren, Pamela Anderson, Katy Perry, Danny Trejo, A\$AP Rocky, Tyler the Creator and Bootsy Collins among others. Nadia's photographs have been published in magazines such as New York Magazine, Vogue Magazine, Marie Claire, Interview magazine, Paper magazine, and The Sunday Times, and in several digital media.

## About the Exhibition

<b>Dates:</b> January 17 - March 29	<b>Opening:</b> January 17, 6 pm
<b>Address:</b> Centro Niemeyer Avenida del Zinc, s/n 33490 Avilés Tel. +34 984 835 031	<b>Price:</b> 3 euro. <b>Reduced:</b> 2,50 euro
<b>Opening Hours:</b> Wednesday to Sunday: 11 am - 2 pm and 6 pm - 7 pm	
<b>Telephone:</b> +34 686 265 924	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@contemporanea.org">info@contemporanea.org</a>
<b>Organized by:</b> Centro Niemeyer, Ayuntamiento de Avilés Gobierno del Principado de Asturias, Puerto de Avilés and Contemporánea	<b>With the coop. of:</b> La Termica and DMB.
<b>Curated by:</b> Mario Martín Pareja	

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# Contemporánea

Contemporanea was founded in 1996 as an entity which promotes art through activities and culture programs in Spain and worldwide.

Mario Martin Pareja and Dumia Medina are the Directors.

He has produced more than 50 exhibitions such as "Apocalypse. Keith Haring & Williams Burroughs"; "Seguir vivo. Michel Houellebecq y Masbedo"; "Warhol & The Factory"; "USA Today"; "Gráfica. A Collections of Prints by the Artists of Beautiful Losers"; "Lydia Lunch. A Retrospective"; "Gráfica. 30 Artistas de la España Joven", "Duffy. Retrospective", "Ryan McGinley. Yearbook", "Richard Kern. Naked and Famous", "Frida Kahlo. Photographs of Leo Matiz at La Casa Azul", "Shadi Ghadirian. Like Every Day", "Nadia Lee Cohen. Not a Retrospective", "Juanjo Guarnido. Blacksad. Algún lugar entre las sombras", "Nirvana. 20 Years", "From Sex To Punk", "John Lennon & Yoko Ono: Suite 1742", among others.

As editor it has also produced books (Lydia Lunch, Michel Houellebecq, William S. Burroughs) or limited edition prints and objects (Richard Kern, C215, Tim Biskup, Miss Van, Lydia Lunch, Jim Houser, René Peña, Victor Castillo, Chema López, Jacobo Castellano, Joan Brossa, Boris Hoppek, Sergio Mora, etc.).

Contemporanea also collaborates with other Museums and Art Centers in musical, spoken word and performing activities. It has worked with entities such as Centre de Cultura Contemporanea de Barcelona (CCCB); La Casa Encendida (Madrid); Fundación para las Artes (Valladolid); DA2-Domus Artium (Salamanca); MUSAC (Leon); Espai D'Art (Castellon); Es Baluard (Majorca); José Saramago Foundation, Joan Brossa Foundation (Barcelona); Telefonica Foundation; Audi Foundation (Beirut); etc.

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## Contacts

For further information / Use of pictures / Interviews

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## Websites

[www.contemporanea.org](http://www.contemporanea.org)

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