

GUCCIVUITTON

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PRESS RELEASE

Craig Coleman

Summer was a Drag

September 19th - October 31st, 2015

Vernissage: Saturday, September 18th, 6:00 -9:00 pm

Guccivuitton is proud to present ***Summer was a Drag***, a collection of paintings by the artist **Craig Coleman** (1961-1994). In his paintings he often challenged boundaries of what was considered “good taste” by taking on troubling topics such as migrants lost at sea, bondage, tarnished glamour and sexual encounters with a sense of humor and the absurd. Coleman often performed in drag as Varla, the everyman/woman, who constantly vied for acceptance but was most often met with ridicule, derision and hatred. Much of this energy was channeled into the paintings which are on view.

Coleman emerged from the early 80s Lower East Side scene of New York that produced David Wojnarowicz, Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Coleman and a handful of other artists and performers were left stranded on South Beach after being lured by a group of New York City developers to help in the creation of an ill-conceived night club. After the deal fell through, Coleman, with little money and no work relied on what he knew best for survival, painting and drag performance.

Coleman had a creative gene which caused him to be productive around the clock. He was a prolific painter, sculptor and performer who always managed to find an outlet for exhibiting his work. He died on South Beach of complications due to AIDS in 1994 not having attained a wider recognition for his art.

Two videos by Mark Holt, ‘*Gigantic Bitch*’ and ‘*Nightmare at the Karaoke*’ starring Varla will be screened October 10th 2015 at 8pm.

Craig Coleman, Summer was a Drag was curated by artist Kevin Arrow.

Guccivuitton would like to thank the following lenders to this exhibition: Glenn Albin, Hannah Lasky, Craig Robins, Tara Solomon and the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami

For questions or additional information, please contact the gallery at office@guccivuitton.net