

Balice Hertling
630 Ninth Avenue, New York, NY 10036

VILLA AURORA REVISITED

TASLIMA AHMED KATIE ALIPRANDO JESSE BENSON BENJAMIN CARLSON
BUCK ELLISON ELIF ERKAN ELOISE HAWSER MARK A. RODRIGUEZ
WITH STEVEN WARWICK/HEATSICK

ORGANIZED BY PARK VIEW @ BALICE HERTLING NYC

Balice Hertling is pleased to announce *Villa Aurora Revisited*, a group exhibition organized by the Los Angeles gallery Park View. An opening reception will be held Wednesday, July 15, from 6 to 9pm at the gallery's New York City location, and the exhibition will run at 630 Ninth Avenue, Suite 403, until August 22. The artists featured in the exhibition include Taslima Ahmed, Katie Aliprando, Jesse Benson, Benjamin Carlson, Buck Ellison, Elif Erkan, Eloise Hawser, Mark A. Rodriguez, and Steven Warwick/Heatsick.

These artists have been grouped in order to think about the contingency of relationships, particularly those that formed through a brief interaction between several of them this past winter at the Villa Aurora, a Spanish-style mansion located in Pacific Palisades, sited at the very west of Los Angeles atop a bluff overlooking the ocean. The writer Lion Feuchtwanger purchased the Villa for \$9,000 in 1943. He and his wife Marta had fled to the U.S. two years before, having narrowly escaped internment in France. The Villa became a site of exile during the Second World War, serving as a colony for German artists and intellectuals.

For the group of contemporaries who had temporarily, recently, or not so recently relocated to the West this past winter, the Villa developed into a perfect place of imagined exile, containing the atmospheric excesses of a quintessential Southern California experience. The uneasy confluence of this fantasized dislocation with the very real history of sociopolitical dislocation contained at the Villa felt relevant to this exercise in semi-fictional dramatization. A few questions: As it personally has come to shape the time that followed, how could this momentary interaction at this august place be treated to its proper significance? And what happens to History in the process of one's current self-contextualization within such a setting? How exactly is the past handled? The desert-tropical milieu seemed to be the dissociative component here, but also the connective tissue between two points at the Villa—past and present, surface and depth.

We were all there enjoying the view on the terrace, living in the present.

The exhibition *Villa Aurora Revisited* has been conceived as an exercise in revisiting a place, reproducing the distorted point-of-view that unavoidably persists during the process of remembrance. It illustrates in many ways the invasion of a subject during that process, returning again and again as an uneasy, sometimes empty figure, draped in an historical sheath that is more often than not discarded. The artists articulate this through a number of strategies that apply abstraction to readily available references in the world—monochromatic wardrobes, hikers, syringes, Berettas, well-designed lamps, shipping boxes, and others. Aesthetic displacements, removals, alterations, and repetitions serve to transform these references, anchoring them back into the world in a highly subjective way, and locking in the memory of their sublimation through the process. Together, the artworks in this exhibition approximate a surrealist, noir version of Los Angeles, a city that continues to passively seduce the outside as it lies in wait for more projections onto itself.

For images or more information, please contact Balice Hertling at gallery@balicehertling.com or Park View at paul@parkviewparkview.com.

Park View
836 S. Park View Street, Los Angeles, CA 90057