



For Immediate Release
June 22, 2023

Art Like Love! (ALL!)

**An art exhibition and media installation by Pioneers Go East Collective
on how queer art is an act of revolution.**

August 25–October 7, 2023

**Opening Reception: Friday, August 25, 5–7pm
Featuring a performance by interdisciplinary artist and vocalist ALEXA Grae**

**Closing Reception: Saturday, October 7, 2–4pm
Featuring an excerpt from Pioneers Go East Collective's *Electric Blue***

Collar Works, 621 River Street, Troy, NY 12180 / collarworks.org



Pioneers Go East Collective: *Electric Blue* / Paul Simon: *Loops* / Mark Tambella: *Early Dream*, Mixed Media

New York – Collar Works is pleased to announce *Art Like Love! (ALL!)*, a cycle of films and performance installations by Pioneers Go East Collective and a new series of drawings and sculptures by collaborators Mark Tambella and Paul Simon.

Art Like Love (ALL!) draws on DIY, camp, and genderfuck aesthetics to celebrate and develop otherness as a way to see what the queer community is, where it has failed, and how it can grow. The exhibition includes original works merging film, performance installation, and new media created by Pioneers Go East Collective over the past four years. The exhibition also features the work of two current collaborators: a new series of drawings by Mark Tambella and large-scale neon and metal sculptures by Paul Simon.

Art Like Love (ALL!) is a springboard for revisiting artists of the 1970s and 1980s, a time when queer art was outside of commercially recognized career pathways and thus was imbued with a political and social activist direction. When queer art became an act of revolution!

Films

My name'sound (movement 1)

Film by Pioneers Go East Collective

A 22-minute video that reimagines and fictionalizes a series of interviews and speeches by literary genius James Baldwin. The project is based on Baldwin's artist manifesto and the lesser-known queer-themed essays he wrote when he lived abroad, first in Paris and then in Istanbul. In a journey of self-discovery and queer creative agency, the protagonists in the video embody Baldwin's passion, rage, lust, and sensuality. They pay homage to Baldwin's writings on same-sex intimacy and shed light on the creative process through the lens of the queer culture.

Art Like Love! (ALL!)

Film by Pioneers Go East Collective

An eight-minute video inspired by radical avant-garde filmmaker Tom Rubnitz, the film borrows DIY and camp aesthetics to celebrate otherness. The project is a springboard for examining DIY video artists in the 1980s who symbolized a refutation of commercial art at the time when SoHo galleries were just beginning to be commercialized. With the bold affirmation that "Art doesn't have to be consumed," *Art Like Love! (ALL!)* sets an optimistic tone, allowing us to reflect on the creative process and artistic intervention. It features New York downtown performance icon and Stonewall witness Agosto Machado, who plays a self-deprecating shaman from the future coming to save all artists, offering a meditation on desires and authenticity.

Agosto Machado: Interviews #1 & #2 (2018/19)

Film by Pioneers Go East Collective

In 2018 and 2019 Pioneers Go East Collective interviewed legendary performance artist Agosto Machado, who spoke about LGBTQ advocacy, the Gay Liberation Movement, Sylvia Rivera, and Keith Haring.

Performance

Electric Blue

By Pioneers Go East Collective

Electric Blue is a durational performance installation inspired by queer thought-provoking literary icon Allen Ginsberg. The installation is open to the public Friday, August 25, from 5pm to 7pm, and Saturday, October 7, from 2pm to 4pm. Audience members can arrive anytime during these open hours and stay as long as they like.

A meditation on creative agency and censorship, *Electric Blue* celebrates past and present LGBTQ resilience in pursuit of artistic freedom. The work deploys personal reflections to underscore how the experiences of the individual and the artist and their communities are inevitably bound together, hinting at the potential for collective action. Taking Ginsberg's writing (defined as pornographic literature when first published), Pioneers examines the author's controversial poetry reflecting on same-sex love and male bonding. A cross-disciplinary project, *Electric Blue* is devised in collaboration with three solo performing artists: Daniel Diaz, ALEXA Grae, and Joey Kipp. Installation and concept by creative director Gian Marco Riccardo Lo Forte, choreography by Symara Johnson and Hollis Bartlett, design by visual artist Mark Tambella and production designer Philip Treviño.

Drawings

New Drawings by Mark Tambella (2023)

Mark Tambella's new body of work includes drawings representing imagined intimacies of vernacular street life, work life, and club life in New York City. Through the 1970s and 1980s, the artist published

many drawings celebrating gay life in *Fag Rag* and *Gay Sunshine*. The exhibition reflects on media and queerness starting in the late 1970s. It is inspired by avant-garde artists of homoerotic subject matter, including Keith Haring, Arch Connolly, Jimmy Wright, and Ahbe Sulit.

Sculptures

Loops by Paul Simon (2021–ongoing)

Neon and metal sculptures by Paul Simon. With a background in human biology and commercial photography, Simon says his approach to making is intuitive and imaginative. He uses light, glass, metalwork, assemblage, and movement as tools for investigation. “I often work with collected scraps and found objects, assembling gestural and expressive anthropomorphic forms that address the body’s contemporary relationship to multidimensional space,” said Simon. “My work subverts the figure—reducing it to bends, cuts, and joints—to depict an abstract and queer understanding of the body as multifarious and always shifting. I seek whim, loops, paradox, and wit encountered in daily life. I often change my mind, go full circle, and arrive at the beginning.”

Images available on request.

About the Artists

Paul Simon, also known as notpaulsimon, is a queer Romanian American artist living and working in Brooklyn, New York. Simon creates a fantastical world in which materialities are present and absent, both hiding in plain sight and visible as objects of the digital imaginary. Born in Southern California and raised in Phoenix, AZ, Simon graduated with a bachelor of science in 2016. Soon after he moved to New York City and received his MFA in photography from the School of Visual Arts (2019). His work has been exhibited internationally at venues including Caselli 11-12 (Milan), Oped Space (Tokyo), Culture Lab (Queens), Untitled (Miami), Paradise Palase (Brooklyn), and Wassaic Project (New York). His work has been featured in *GUP*, *Garage*, and *Wired*, among other publications. He is the recipient of the 2019 PDN Photography Award for his thesis project “Genesis of Desire.”

Mark Tambella is a New York-based visual artist. He is a painter, installation artist, environmental and site-specific designer, and artist-in-residence with La MaMa ETC and Pioneers Go East Collective, and a member of Great Jones Repertory Company. His paintings have been exhibited in more than 35 solo and group exhibitions at La MaMa’s Gallery (NYC) from the 1980s to the present. Additional solo exhibitions at the John Davis Gallery in Hudson, NY (2008–2018), Chashama Gallery in Harlem (group exhibition, 2013), Marmara Manhattan Gallery (2005), Portrait Show/PS122 (NYC), a benefit show for St Vincent’s Hospital (NYC). His work emphasizes devised groupings of people and places, including gay life and queer-identifying artists, impressionistic “plein air” work, and portraits of his neighborhood and creative-hood family. Published art: *BOMB Magazine*/Absolute Tambella, *Fag Rag*, and *Gay Sunshine* (San Francisco). Illustrations for *Lilac Cure* and *Markings*, poetry chapbooks by Richard George-Murray, and *My Stone Is Not Dead* by Piotr Zbigniew Gawelko. Tambella has been a guest teacher at Williams College (Williamstown, MA), teaching drawing and painting technique. Education: Visual School of the Arts (1973).

Pioneers Go East Collective is a radical queer laboratory collective of performing and visual artists dedicated to dance-theater and video art to empower the LGBTQ experience. Based in New York City, the collective is led by LGBTQ-identifying, BIPOC, and immigrant artists and cultural organizers **Daniel Diaz**, **Joey Kipp**, **Gian Marco Riccardo Lo Forte**, and **Philip Treviño**. The collective portrays same-gender-loving experiences, memory, and marginalization that resonate with contemporary lives. Pioneers Go East Collective combines stories of vulnerability and courage with popular culture to facilitate communal meaning and advocate for cultural integrity. Pioneers Go East Collective’s work has been widely presented in New York City at BRIC Arts Media, Judson Church, The LGBT Center, Center for Performance Research, Abrons Arts Center, La MaMa, JACK, Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance, Chashama Gallery (Harlem), Goethe Institute gallery, Exponential Festival, St. Ann’s Warehouse, Process Space at Governors Island/LMCC, Lumberyard (Catskill, NY), as well as Buddies in Bad Times in Toronto. Current collaborators include syd island, Vanessa Rappa,

Symara Johnson, ALEXA Grae, Darrin Wright, Mark Tambella, Paul Simon, Jo Wiegandt, Azmi Mert Erdem, joy (Zanni productions), Lynn Ligammari, and Bryan Baira. www.pioneersgoeast.org

Pioneers Go East Collective's bios can be found [here](#).

Pioneers Go East Collective's programs in 2022–23 are made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, New York City Council's discretionary funding provided by Councilmember Carlina Rivera and the 2nd District, SU-CASA (DCLA), Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Harkness Foundation for Dance, The Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation, A.R.T./New York's NYC Small Theatres Fund made possible with support from the Howard Gilman Foundation, and the Mosaic Network and Fund in The New York Community Trust.

About Collar Works

Collar Works is a non-profit art space dedicated to supporting emerging and underrepresented artists, working in any media, exhibiting challenging and culturally relevant contemporary artworks. Expanding the current art vernacular in New York's capital region, Collar Works provides a venue for community dialogue focused on serious, provocative, and spirited artworks. www.collarworks.org

General Information

Collar Works
621 River Street
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Email: info@collarworks.org

Hours:
Thursday and Friday, 3–7pm
Saturday, 10–2pm
Other times by appointment

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