



## **“The Cat and the Horse”**

Open Call for Artworks for Instinct #8, September 2019

inspired by

“My Dearest Sweet Love: Christopher Isherwood und Don Bachardy”

Open call for art for, by Instinct.Berlin and Schwules Museum Berlin

Deadline for submission of proposal: June 30, 2019

Instinct.Berlin is an art organization questioning queer masculinities and organizes a biannual exhibition taking place in the heart of Schöneberg. For its upcoming Fall 2019 edition, Instinct will respond to the exhibition “My Dearest Sweet Love: Christopher Isherwood und Don Bachardy,” shown at Schwules Museum Berlin from June 14 until August 26, 2019. “My Dearest Sweet Love” mostly displays drawings and paintings by Bachardy, documenting his life with Isherwood and their circle of friends. Artists are invited to present works inspired by this exhibition, by the relationship of Isherwood and Bachardy, and by Isherwood’s journey to Berlin and beyond. We invite artists that are based in Berlin, or willing to move here for August and the first half of September to work on their projects and then present them to the public.

A total of ten artists will be accepted to contribute to the upcoming Instinct exhibition, titled “The Cat and the Horse.” Artists eligible will be selected by a jury lead by Eric Le Rouge (Instinct.Berlin), Peter Rehberg (Schwules Museum), Elijah Burger (artist), and Joseph Rodota (Christopher Isherwood Foundation).

### **Cat and Horse**

The “Cat” and the “Horse” are manifestations of the intimacy of Isherwood and Bachardy’s relationship. In their love letters, these are the names they gave each other, and an animalistic imagery suffuses these letters. At the same time, Isherwood’s life story has always been one of journey, and this reflects in their relationship as well. Born in England, Isherwood moved to Berlin in 1929 where he experienced a sexual awakening. When the Nazis came into power in 1933, he had to leave Germany and eventually settled in Los Angeles, where he met Bachardy. His Berlin part of the journey, as brief as it was, had an impact on his subsequent life and their mutual relationship. It will also be an integral part of the exhibition.

While Bachardy’s and Isherwood’s works invite many possible connections, from sexual to spiritual adventures, we are especially interested in contributions that emphasize the significance of Berlin as an artistic environment. Isherwood’s *Berlin Stories*, the basis for the musical and the film *Cabaret*, have been immensely productive in conjuring up Berlin’s past as both free-spirited and endangered. What links the experience of the transnational queer

artistic community in Berlin today with the archive of Isherwood's stories? It seems that people still come to Berlin to find their lives changed the way Isherwood did. How does the myth of Weimar Berlin resonate with the rapidly changing conditions of contemporary life in Berlin? If Berlin really is this liberating space where people come to reinvent their lives, how do they experience the freedoms the city offers? How does Isherwood's desire for the working class men of Berlin resonate with current practices by artists living under conditions of neoliberal precarity?

For the artistic responses to Isherwood and Bachardy, we envision a wide range of possible media, from painting and photography to performance and dance. The ten artists selected will be invited to produce their artworks on site in Berlin. Throughout August, the space of Village.Berlin can be used as a studio/working space. On September 12, the results will be exhibited as the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of Instinct at Village. "The Cat and the Horse" will run until September 15, coinciding with Folsom Europe.

Please send a one page proposal together with a short CV to Eric Le Rouge (hello@instinct.berlin) or Peter Rehberg (peter.rehberg@schwulesmuseum.de), no later than June 30, 2019.

[www.instinct.berlin](http://www.instinct.berlin)

[www.schwulesmuseum.de](http://www.schwulesmuseum.de)