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Pipo Nguyen-duy | *AsSimulation*

September 5 – November 1, 2025

Opening reception:

Friday, September 5, 2025

6 – 8 PM

Artist talk:

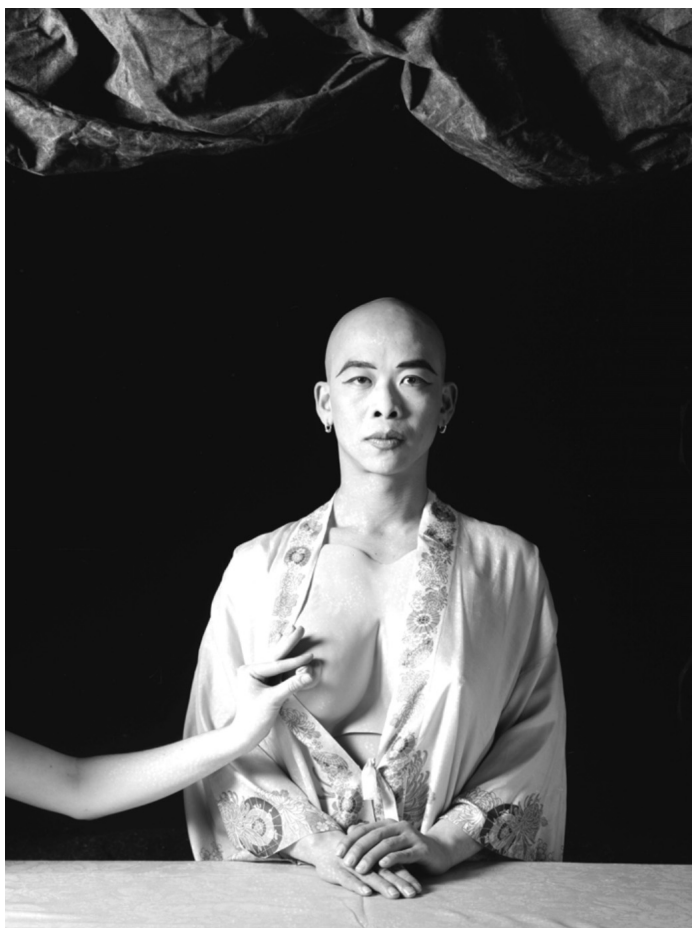
Saturday, September 6, 2025

4 – 6 PM

CLAMP is pleased to announce “AsSimulation”—Pipo Nguyen-duy’s fourth solo show with the gallery.

Pipo Nguyen-duy is a Vietnamese-American artist born in Hue, Vietnam, in 1962. At thirteen years of age, in 1975, he immigrated to the United States as a boat refugee. He was educated in the United States and eventually earned an MA in photography from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, in 1992, and an MFA in 1995. All of Nguyen-duy’s artworks grapple with the topic of his assimilation to Western culture.

From 1995 – 1998, Nguyen-duy worked on his series “AsSimulation”—what he describes as a tragic comedy dealing with race, sex, and gender with respect to cultural assimilation. These staged black-and-white self-portrait photographs utilize traditional Asian theatrical and visual language to imitate and interpret Renaissance and Baroque paintings and sculpture. The final prints are displayed as an installation mimicking the museum tradition of exhibiting classical paintings in substantial frames with small metal plaques bearing the artwork’s title.



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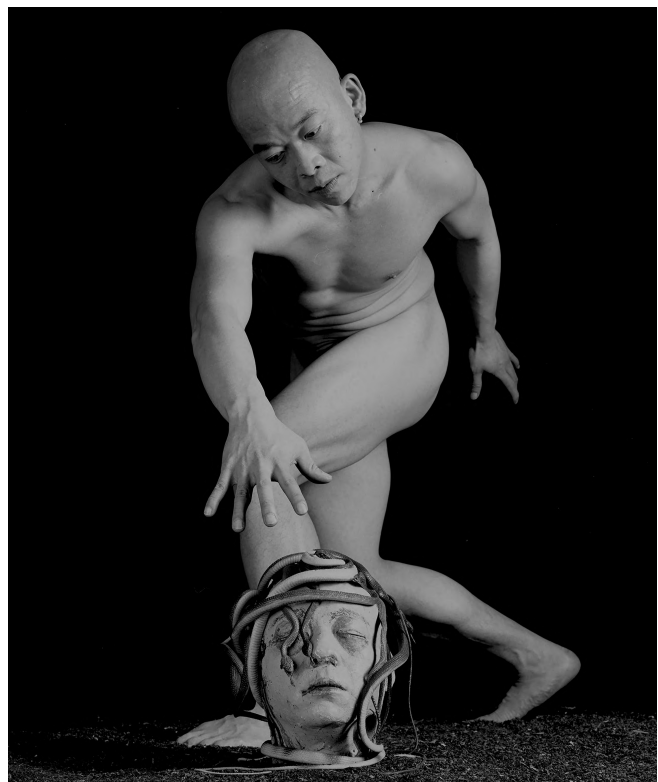
The artist states: “‘AsSimulation’ uses the visual language of one culture to simulate that of another—an artistic assimilation analogous to the simulation in cultural assimilation. However, the self-conscious artifice serves only to highlight the artificiality inherent in the process of assimilation. ‘AsSimulation’ is thus an acknowledgement of a culturally ‘in-between’ place, where one belongs to both cultures, yet at the same time neither.”

Nguyen-duy’s strategy also works to undermine the traditional notion of gender. For example, in “The Anonymous (Gabrielle d’Estrées),” the artist recreates the famous European painting “Gabrielle d’Estrées and the Duchesse de Villars,” in which he poses semi-nude with his woman-like breast pinched by another woman. Japanese scholar Takashi Aso points out, while the original painting raises the topic of lesbianism at the end of sixteenth-century Europe, Nguyen-duy’s reconstruction points to the notion of the transgender. Aso writes: “[The artist] undermines the western tradition of fine arts, as he puts himself in a position of a sexually attractive European woman at the same time he demonstrates his own Asian identity by wearing Kimono-like cloth.”

In another work titled “Perseus and Medusa,” also discussed by Takashi Aso, Nguyen-duy reenacts Laurent Marqueste’s sculpture “Perseus and the Gorgon” (1890). Posing as the Greek Hero Perseus, the artist assumes a western hypermasculinity in contrast to the feminine passivity often assigned to Asian men in the United States.

“AsSimulation” is the artist’s demonstration of the possibility of deconstructing and, then, reconstructing “alternative histories” for Vietnamese-Americans from their own point of view.

Pipo Nguyen-duy was born in Vietnam within thirty kilometers of the demilitarized zone of the 18th Parallel, and describes hearing gunfire every day of his early life. He later immigrated to the United States as a political refugee.



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Nguyen-duy has taken on many things in life in pursuit of his diverse interests. As a teenager in Vietnam, he competed as a national athlete in table tennis. He also spent some time living as a Buddhist monk in Northern India. Eventually Nguyen-duy earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics at Carleton College. He then moved to New York City, where he worked as a bartender and later as a nightclub manager, before completing two graduate degrees at the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque.

Nguyen-duy has received many awards and grants including a prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship in Photography; a National Endowment for the the Arts; an En Foco Grant; a Professional Development Grant from the College Arts Association; a National Graduate Fellowship from the American Photography Institute; a Fellowship from the Oregon Arts Commission; a B. Wade and Jane B. White Fellowship in the Humanities at Oberlin College; and three Individual Artist Fellowships from the Ohio Arts Council. He participated as an artist-in-residence at Monet's garden through The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Artists at Giverny Fellowship; as an artist-in-residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito, California; and participated in Light Work's Artist-in-Residence program.

Nguyen-duy has lectured widely and his work is part of many public collections in the United States, Europe, and Asia. He served as a Professor of Studio Art and Photography at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, for over two decades.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or see clampart.com. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 6 PM. Mondays by appointment.

Image 1: © Pipo Nguyen-duy; "The Anonymous (Gabrielle d'Estrées)," 1995-1998; Vintage gelatin silver print in artist's original frame; 24 x 20 inches; Courtesy of CLAMP, New York.

Image 2: © Pipo Nguyen-duy; "Perseus & Medusa," 1995-1998; Gelatin silver print (Edition of 8); 24 x 20 inches; Courtesy of CLAMP, New York.