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FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION

REDCAT Presents
[Aria Dean: Suite!](#)
June 5 - Oct. 24, 2021



Aria Dean, Suite! Digital rendering. Courtesy of the artist, Château Shatto, Los Angeles, and Greene Naftali, New York.

LOS ANGELES (May 24, 2021) — Opening June 5 and running through October 24, 2021, **Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater (REDCAT)** presents **[Suite!](#)**, a solo exhibition by Los Angeles-born and New York-based artist, writer, and curator **Aria Dean**.

A newly-commissioned video and installation, *Suite!* stars a chorus line of Kudzu plants set within digitally-rendered versions of the installation as it appears in each of its presenting institutions. Accompanied by an original score, the work's choreography combines the artist's motion-captured movements with online video content, including a range of traditions such as Broadway musicals, 20th-century avant-garde dance, ballet, and pop choreography.

Dean's original writing is interspersed throughout the film, alongside other texts, in a bricolaged direct address. Compressing, converting, and dispersing the artist as a non-human entity through different digital and discursive operations, *Suite!* models a weird porosity between the artist's role as a maker, a product, as well as a subject.

Sixteenth-century philosopher and mathematician Giordano Bruno, who was burned at the stake for heresy, is among Dean's quotations. Challenging Nicolaus Copernicus' theory of the sun as the center of the universe, Bruno proposed that there may be an infinite number of suns in the universe, each with its own system of planets in orbit. Taking note from the experimental work of Woody Vasulka—who pioneered digital image manipulation—Dean investigates the relationship between images and the physical world as well as the potential for multiple, nested (actual and virtual) realities offered by moving images after the internet.

Dean explores these ideas using Kudzu (*pueraria montana*)—an invasive plant species that dominates the southeastern United States, both in its landscape and its cultural imaginary—as a proxy object and subject. Overtaking the sides of roads throughout the region, the species also appears frequently in Southern Gothic literature and other American traditions. Kudzu is a structural parasite, essentially smothering all other plant life. Rather than supporting itself, the vine trails and climbs over other objects, from buildings to other plants, to reach light. The only way to kill it for good is to burn it.

As Dean proposes, people, landscapes, objects, and concepts are connected by death and haunting as in the Gothic tradition and contemporary necropolitics (the exercise of political power over life and death). Her interest in Kudzu lies in its resonance with Blackness as “a sort of viral force, a system of meaning capable of reproducing itself and its own meaning structures without any ontological core,” as well as its capacity to provide an inhuman, pseudo-organic proxy object for the artist's digital presence within the work.

***Aria Dean: Suite!* is co-commissioned by REDCAT and the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève and curated by Carmen Amengual.**

***Aria Dean: Suite!* is funded in part with generous support from the Elizabeth A. Greenberg Fund. Additional support is provided by Greene Naftali, New York and William Anawalt on behalf of Anawalt Lumber.**

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Aria Dean (b. 1993 in Los Angeles) lives and works in New York. Her upcoming solo REDCAT exhibition will travel to the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève in 2022. Recent solo and group exhibitions and performances include *Made in L.A. 2020: a version*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2021); Greene Naftali, New York (2020); Artists Space, New York (2020); MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts (2020); Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York (2019); Institute for Contemporary Art at

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia (2019); Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (2019); Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (2019); Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (2018); Swiss Institute, New York (2018); and the de Young Museum, San Francisco (2017). Her writing has appeared in Artforum, Art in America, e-flux, Spike Quarterly, and Texte zur Kunst, among others. Dean's work is in public collections such as Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York.

INFORMATION:

[Aria Dean: Suite!](#)

June 5-Oct. 24, 2021

Admission is FREE.

Appointments are required and will open this week.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Sunday, 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

To ensure a safe environment for everyone at REDCAT, the following guidelines have been implemented:

- Mask or face coverings must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times, by all visitors and staff
- All guests must maintain at a distance of 6 feet from other visitors and staff
- Children must be supervised by an adult
- Guests are asked not to visit if experiencing a fever, cough, or respiratory illness.

Should visitors have questions about health and safety precautions, they should email info.redcat@calarts.edu.

For more information, press comps, or artist interviews, please contact Katie Dunham (REDCAT/Katie Dunham Communications) at redcatpr@calarts.edu.

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The **Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater (REDCAT)**, CalArts' downtown center for contemporary arts, is a multidisciplinary center for innovative visual, performing and media arts founded by CalArts in the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex in downtown Los Angeles. Through performances, exhibitions, screenings and literary events, REDCAT introduces diverse audiences, students and artists to the most influential developments in the arts from around the world, and gives artists in this region the creative support they need to achieve national and international stature. REDCAT continues the tradition of the California Institute of the Arts, its parent organization, by encouraging experimentation, discovery and lively civic discourse. For current program and exhibition information, visit redcat.org.

California Institute of the Arts has set the pace for educating professional artists since 1970. Offering rigorous undergraduate and graduate degree programs through six schools—art, critical studies, dance, film/video, music, and theater—CalArts has championed creative excellence, critical reflection, and the development of new forms and expressions. As successive generations of faculty and alumni have helped shape the landscape of contemporary arts, the institute first envisioned by Walt Disney encompasses a vibrant, eclectic community with global reach, inviting experimentation, independent inquiry, and active collaboration and exchange among artists, artistic disciplines and cultural traditions.