



Press Release
Page 1/2

TAÍNA H. CRUZ
Pixie Theatre
Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin
10.09.2026-07.11.2026



Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler is pleased to present *Pixie Theatre*, Taina H. Cruz's second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Pixie Theatre privileges mood and association over narrative continuity. Its tableaux unfold from painting to painting without resolving into a stable sequence; the viewer encounters scenes in progress, uncertain of what preceded them or what might follow. The exhibition approaches the temporal logic of the fairy tale, where causality is porous and transformation can occur without explanation, rather than a plot bound by a logocentric arc of time.

Cruz works at the threshold where socially shared registers of recognition become enigmatic. Bodies shift shape, familiar sites are estranged from their habitual meanings, and ordinary encounters take on supernatural qualities. The recognizable is not abandoned so much as made unstable. Humor is central to this process, appearing through mischief, exaggeration, and absurdity. It complicates the unease that permeates the work, allowing tension and uncertainty to coexist with levity and beauty. Folklore and fantasy function similarly: rather than constituting an elsewhere opposed to reality, they extend lived experience and memory beyond the limits of the immediately real.

At moments, Cruz's paintings conjure the pictorial language of the Old Masters through her handling of light and shadow, the arrangement of bodies, and the dramatic organization of the image. An idyllic, at times *fantasmagorique* luminosity lends certain compositions a historical gravitas that is repeatedly offset by gestures of play. These art-historical references are therefore neither citations nor exercises in stylistic continuity. They coexist with a distinctly contemporary visual language in which historical modes of representation are filtered through the conditions of contemporary image culture.

This temporal instability extends to Cruz's treatment of the body. Digital distortion and painterly intervention converge upon the figure, producing bodies that appear material and mediated. The hyperreal and the mythopoetic are not presented as opposing terms, but as interdependent modes through which contemporary subjectivity is displayed and produced. The body becomes a site of inscription: shaped by inherited narratives, circulating images, memory, fantasy, and the material contingencies.

Pixie Theatre thus considers seeing as both a subjective and culturally mediated act. Against an image culture characterized by an excess of signs, Cruz returns insistently to the embodied encounter: to the capacity of an image to solicit recognition, projection, unease, empathy, or desire before its meaning becomes fixed. What emerges is a conception of the self not as a stable image but as something continually actualized through acts of perception, transformation, and relation.



Press Release

Page 2/2

— TAÍNA H. CRUZ (b. 1998, New York) lives and works in New Haven. Across painting, sculpture, installation, and video, she builds immersive worlds where figures, objects and animals inhabit charged architectural spaces, staging acts of becoming.

Drawing on African American and Caribbean traditions and shaped by coming of age within networked image culture, Cruz approaches identity as fluid and iterative. Her work stages moments of transformation where folklore and contemporary visual systems overlap and evolve.



— Relevant exhibitions include MoMA PS1, New York (2026); The Whitney Biennial, New York (2026); Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (2025); MMK Frankfurt (2025); Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2024); MoMA PS1, New York (2023); Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2023, solo); Studio Mondial, Berlin (2023); Martos Gallery, New York (2023); Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2023); Housing Gallery, New York (2022, solo); Embajada, San Juan (2022, solo); Housing Gallery, New York (2021); New Release Gallery, Online (2020); The Gormley Gallery, Baltimore, (2020).

Cruz received an MFA from the Yale School of Art (2025) and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art (2020), as well as the GO-A: Goya Opportunity Award in San Juan, Puerto Rico (2019), and was featured on the MICA Dean's List from 2016–2020.

