

Camera Doppia Fin Serck-Hanssen with Nate Lippens

That Moment When It Happen or Doesn't

Dates

November 6th 2026—

January 10th 2027

Opening

November 5th

at 6:00 PM

That Moment When It Happens or Doesn't brings the work of artist and photographer Fin Serck-Hanssen and writer Nate Lippens into dialogue for the first time at Camera Doppia. Their photographs and poetic lines, respectively, make no claim to a resolute truth. Both prominent contemporary voices in queer culture and discourse, Serck-Hanssen and Lippens create work that attends to the infinite forms that a queer touch, rather than a queer image or story, can take in the very act of recording them. Without fitting into a precise narrative scheme that might eventually be thought of as queer, their work defies the urgency to heal history or fully satisfy the confessional expectations often ascribed to queer representation. Instead, it evokes the perception of a different condition of mind, radiant with emotions, sometimes undefined ones: a mix of spirituality, desire and sensuality difficult to explain, an indulgence in states of pure existence, an appetite for life without a teleological outcome.

The exhibition presents a selection of previously unseen photographs drawn from Serck-Hanssen's five-decade-long archive and a series of new, deeply personal and intimate images created from his archive specifically for this occasion. The selection has unfolded along a path that was not determined in advance, resisting a discursive mode of selecting and sequencing: each photograph is, in one way or another, the singular manifestation of a scene, one without either a script or a plot. The title, an excerpt from an original text written by Nate Lippens for a forthcoming monograph on the artist's work, has guided this unorthodox and anti-temporal trajectory. It calls forth that state of the gaze that lingers for a few seconds or many hours before moving towards another possibility, or an elsewhere. It is the chance of a new encounter, of a renewed attraction, of a time and space that remain suspended between what manifests, what might still happen, and what ultimately never does. The moment called upon by the title is precisely that: a moment detached from the sequence of moments that precede or follow it, as if it had never existed as an opportunity, but only as an accident that might eventually reveal itself, if only once.

Starting in the late-1970s by documenting punk, rock and new wave bands as they emerged, from The Cure to Depeche Mode, Fin Serck-Hanssen became known as a master of portraiture. Over the years, he shifted his focus towards the lives and stories of disenfranchised communities, both within and beyond his native Norway. He became an important photographic voice for the LGBTQ+ movements from the late 1970s and early 1980s onward, and later a symbolic spokesperson for those affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, lending his photography to countless governmental and non-governmental prevention and safer-sex campaigns. Over the course of fifty years, Serck-Hanssen has created an extensive archive, which he has now, for the first time, cruised and revisited. In response to this gesture of cruising and visual promiscuity, US-based writer Nate Lippens has written an original text that moves between Serck-Hanssen's photographs and his own memories and encounters with artists, writers, images, and other archives. Cruising becomes for Lippens a way of looking at both images and the world: lingering, recognizing signals, following attractions, and allowing unexpected associations to come to the surface. "Serck-Hanssen has spent recent time revisiting his archive. Cruising it. This may seem coy. Cruising, really? Don't you mean selecting or curating? No, cruising," Lippens writes. "Some of this is from very young; the too-long lingering look, the attraction not just to other boys but the wrong objects and subjects [...]. Later, this looking becomes a gaze, sexualized and actionable. [...] Once-over twice, eye contact, walk ten paces, and look back. That moment when it happens or doesn't."

Moving between personal and collective histories, his text reflects on queer archives as spaces of both loss and survival, and considers what it means to return to images without attempting to correct or glorify the past, but rather to allow them to generate new associations and juxtapositions between memory and desire. "The revisitation of a personal archive is a luxury for gay men of our age," he continues. "I often think of the lives cut short by AIDS and the artworks never produced and the ones lost to careless families and landlords who cleared out the apartments of the dead. [...] Deciding one's life matters enough, the belief these materials, personal records, and art will mean something, will be valued, is a way to project oneself into a future everyone tells you is foreclosed, if they bother to acknowledge you exist at all."

In *That Moment When It Happens or Doesn't*, images from different years are exhibited without following a precise chronological order. Far from constituting a diary in photographic form or an occasion to rethink lost narratives or archival gaps, the works on display share a different form of pathos: the persistence of desire and its potential to offer another way of relating to the past and its legacy. Many of the photographs are drawn from projects that never came to light; others from informal photographic sessions in domestic spaces with casual or long-term lovers; still others are preparatory tests for ideas that eventually took a different form. There are also images that feel almost forbidden: private exercises never intended for anyone else's eyes, alongside portraits of people important to the artist that defy the conventions through which we might expect certain subjects to be portrayed. In the boxes containing rephotographed images from the archive alongside other original material, memories from different periods in time are mixed together: photographs that have never been used or shown to anyone other than the artist; experiments from the early years involving members of his family, through which Serck-Hanssen explored how the body might be detached from the story that contains it. Some presences are only whispered. Others are blurred. Others still glitter. Occasionally, images from the same photo shoot are presented as diptychs, exposing the uncertainty of choosing which one holds the more powerful promise of a desired touch. As Serck-Hanssen selects fragments of longing from his archive, Lippens embraces this fragmentariness in his writing. It becomes one of the ways to express a state of suspension, where desire lingers, dense and intense, without ever resolving itself, yet recognized in both its ambiguity and singularity.

The imaginative labor of both Serck-Hanssen and Lippens is concerned with notes of grace. Fin's delicate approach to his models, never requiring them to undertake the compositional work, appears at once indifferent to and aware of the gaze of the other. His images, like Lippens's writings, maintain a cinematic quality of figuration. Like still frames from a film, they disclose neither its plot nor its narrative implications, but simply punctuate the temporal sequence of what we see, read, or experience. Behind the casual comfort of the pose and the body, of literary composition and syntax, the artist and the author do not entirely disappear. In the contingent manifestation of a moment, one is frozen, while others have yet to reveal themselves.

Fin Serck-Hanssen started his career in the late 1970s, photo documenting the punk and underground music scene both in Norway and the UK. He captured the behind the scenes of legendary bands such as Depeche Mode, The Cure, R.E.M. and the Clash. Since the late 1980s Serck-Hanssen has portrayed the Norwegian queer community during and after the AIDS crisis. Furthermore, he focused on projects of social justice, offering a platform of visibility to the living conditions of North Sea divers or inmates in national detention centres. His work has been exhibited internationally, including at Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki (FI), ICA, London (UK), Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen (DK). His work is part of private and public collections including Victoria & Albert Museum, London (UK) and the National Museum, Oslo (NO).

Nate Lippens is the author of three novels published by Semiotext(e) and Pilot Press UK. *My Dead Book* was a finalist for the Republic of Consciousness Prize and named a Book of the Year in *The White Review*, *Frieze*, and *The Guardian*. In 2025, it was published in Spanish as *Mi libro de los muertos* by Los Tres Editores in Madrid. His second novel *Ripcord* was named a *New Statesman* Book of the Year and was featured in *BOMB*, *The Nation*, *Interview*, and *The Chicago Review of Books*. His most recent novel is *Bastards*. His fiction has appeared in many anthologies including *Sluts*, edited by Michelle Tea, and *Pathetic Literature*, edited by Eileen Myles.

That Moment When It Happens or Doesn't is the fifth exhibition organized by Camera Doppia, exploring the intersection of queer perspectives and identity politics. The exhibition opens to the public on November 6, 2026, and runs until January 10, 2027. To arrange a visit, please email info@cameradoppia.cc.

CC is an independent exhibition project conceived by artist Giovanni De Francesco, curator Tommaso Speretta, and art director Edoardo Ferrari. It periodically appears and disappears within De Francesco's studio in Milan. CC serves as a dynamic platform where dialogue is central to each exhibition. Two authors or distinct practices enter into relation, echoing the collaborative approach of the founders in shaping each project. Grounded in a multidisciplinary approach, it places a strong emphasis on exploring queer perspectives and identities. Each exhibition is structured as a dialogue between an artist and a creative practitioner from a different field.

Camera Doppia is located at Via Francesco Ingegnoli 13, Milan.



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