

Crocodiles emerged around 200 million years ago, and when looking at the crocodiles that exist today, they bear a surprising resemblance to their distant ancestors. Although they have evolved over time, they nonetheless serve as windows into the past—a world before or without humans. Olesen's crocodiles, such as *The earliest Crocodilian, circa 95 million years ago* or *American Alligator, circa 83.5 million years ago*, are made from materials like plaster, wood, chicken wire, and canvas, painted in shimmering greenish and black hues. They are both naturalistic and artificial, rough with visible traces of their physical construction and painting process—unstable as images, at once menacing and endangered. They embody a dormant wildness and velocity. Past and present seem to short-circuit, introducing a broader time horizon and evoking affects beyond the constant 24/7 attention of the present.

The exhibition by Henrik Olesen consists of new works as well as pieces created by the artist in recent years: images of raw meat printed on plastic, castings of milk cartons in epoxy, sculptural boxes with silkscreened images and texts, paintings on masonite and canvas, informational texts and flyers, and panels depicting homosexuality and punishment throughout 500 years of art history. The exhibition also includes recreations of earlier works within new installations. Images and symbols morph into one another, are consumed, and transform into an open system or food chain where hierarchies are destabilized. It is an open and unresolved universe, interwoven across themes such as vulnerability, violence, the body, identity, history and natural history, humans and animals.

The paintings, such as *(rotten sun)*, 2020 or *Body of Shit 2*, 2020, reference the body's interior and digestive system as plastic processes of absorption, breakdown, transformation, and excretion—where images and symbols are ground up and either metabolized into new energy or discarded as waste. Everything in the exhibition is shaped by a plastic consciousness and sensibility: processes of application, scraping, and the formation of new layers. The box sculptures are empty stomachs digesting their two- and three-dimensional contents. They are juxtaposed with art historical charts (with connections to sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld's boards from the interwar period), a nonlinear collection of images that attach to and detach from concepts of bodies, power, and desire.