# **STUART PERKINS** *If Ancesors Anchor* April 1 – May 30, 2020

## THE WORK

New York-based artist Stuart Perkins photographs himself in scenes of reductive tropes of black culture, using racially charged props and tableaux. Perkins images attempt to reason with racism, appropriation and assimilation, inviting viewers to examine their own assumptions.

In our second episode of <u>TOGETHER, APART</u> (our twice-weekly IGTV program), Perkins offers a detailed discussion of the cultural-historical references and concept behind one the work shown at right. The poems he references in that discussion are included on following pages.

### THE ARTIST

Born in Oklahoma and raised in Germany, artist Richard Stuart Perkins creates photographs that question public and private personas. Perkins' creative process uses interviews, fragmentation, and histories of portraiture, cinema and art, to ask questions about what it means to be an individual in societies that seek to define our lives externally.





*If Ancestors Anchor #2*, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4 XII

If Ancestors anchor and History instructs the hold of those who died and the stories told of the dead by the living are meant to settle the question of who, and why and where

#### but

all history is compost and we are atop it like a fungus like a mold like a plant bacterium

of Edens and lawns the pastoral imagined place where peaceable kingdoms exist,

Then we like to see the world as a garden either lost or in the process of being made.

All gardens are manufactured things, In them what the soil brings is a fight between the pruned and the free tended and fenced, We love only the things we want to grow and kill all that we do not wish to see.





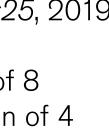
If Ancestors Anchor #24, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4



If Ancestors Anchor #11, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4

If Ancestors Anchor #25, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4







To dance and sing and whirl and play #25, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4

#### XIX

Surely, I am able. The reach of arms Guarantee my balance. And what I am to Myself, I am to you 'cause There's no way Less of me is better.

Sorely, I am able. My poverty begat Your sermons of The piety in thrift So well I have utilized The dust, and the bone.

Simply, I am able. Mind and body Bending Ears listening Eyes seeing I can crouch Ready to And lean When the tilt Is right for resting.



So Here We Are #31, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4



So Here We Are #37, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4



So Here We Are #36, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4

#### XXI

So, here we are. You there. Me here. The space between us Yours by default, mine by time's reckoning, and you know that with each exhale your insistence upon this stasis weakens both of our bodies.

So, why is it we don't move? We define and then defend, We make a stand, and stay, Fat accumulates about our bones Our vessels and veins squeezed. The spirit of punishment Animates us, and we Pretend the Furies are Not sent to punish men But are in fact the best Of our manhood. Stuck As we are in this place Where men and war And women and rage Are defining characterizes of a well made house.

So, here we are. Looking backwards Looking at shadows Standing in spaces Too small for the futures We wish to deliver.



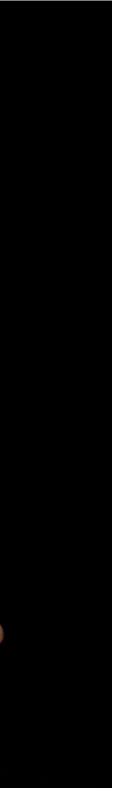


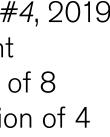
If Ancestors Anchor #3, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4



If Ancestors Anchor #19, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4

*If Ancestors Anchor #4*, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4







*If Ancestors Anchor - Laure's Child #3*, 2019 archival pigment print 8 x 8 inches, edition of 8 30 x 30 inches, edition of 4 All images and poems © 2020 Richard Stuart Perkins. All other text © 2020 Upfor LLC.

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