

Jordan Loeppky-Kolesnik, *Parasympathetic Fever Dream*, 2023

*Parasympathetic Fever Dream* intervenes in the circadian rhythm of plants, expanding the artist's sculptural engagement with eco-science fiction. In dim gallery lighting simulating twilight, visitors navigate four arborvitae hedges arranged in an X-shaped formation. The plants have been trained to "sleep" during daylight hours while the work is on public view, and to "wake" at sunset, when full-spectrum LED grow lights simulate daylight. Four blue, 450 nanometer-spectrum lasers create subtle guideposts or barriers, suggesting a psychic or erotic projection from the plants. Together these environmental and physiological alterations constitute a speculative gesture within an incubator-like installation that signals both body hacking and anthropogenic environmental change.

*Parasympathetic Fever Dream* heightens the sense that humans and plants might be intelligible to each other through the lens of the parasympathetic nervous system, the term for systems of bodily maintenance (like breathing, sexual arousal, crying, and digesting) that link the exterior world and environmental factors to us through the unconscious. If altered metabolic processes are the parasympathetic part of Loeppky-Kolesnik's work, a faux-evening encounter with other visitors traversing the hedgerows provides the fever dream. Contriving to turn the hedges "off" makes the viewer a witness to the resting plants and their silent cycles of growth, while swapping day for night evokes a paradox of privacy and voyeurism familiar to queer cruising, as well as to the history of growing these plants as concealers of private property. Situating the potential for a psychosexual episode within the realm of modified nature, Loeppky-Kolesnik's work generates a new means of sensing unconscious analogs for the fragility of our own bodies, and for how technologies of cultivation both create and prepare us for unknown environmental and biological futures.