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Daniel Rampulla: *Collapse*
January 29 – March 19, 2021



Daniel Rampulla © *Half Cut*, 2020.



Daniel Rampulla © *Riis, After Hours*, 2018.

Kapp Kapp, Philadelphia is pleased to announce Daniel Rampulla: *Collapse*, which marks Rampulla's debut exhibition with Kapp Kapp and his second solo exhibition. Rampulla, through his photographic practice, studies our everyday relational connections and tensions, focusing his lens on tenderness in queer life.

A friend of the artist's described two types of photographers, as Rampulla recalls, a gatherer and a farmer; one who searches for a space or form they resonate with and one who cultivates a scene for a perfect vignette. Rampulla falls between the two, finding moments in his landscapes that could not have been posed, or recreating just the right tension between two of his figures. Rampulla approaches landscape and figure with a shared empathy and deep understanding that, unconsciously, weaves a connection through his oeuvre.

Take *Riis, After Hours*, 2018 a scene of two men, entwined on a lifeguard's chair at the beach, towering over the quiet waters behind. With just enough emphasis on the two bodies to call your attention, Rampulla compassionately acknowledges the love of their touch and physical connection, while the calm of the ocean mirrors their tenderness. The only candid portrait in the exhibition, *Riis, After Hours* speaks perfectly to Rampulla's balance between approach, observing these strangers in their loving embrace while concurrently pausing to make just the right composition. Printed at almost three feet in height, the monumentality of this image stands both as a nod to the power of the landscapes Rampulla photographs and as a greater representation of his practice.

The exhibition's title, *Collapse*, comes from this very nod to connection, two bodies "collapsing" together, the "collapse" of two people into one relationship, or the "collapse" of a dune as the shore begins to recede. Rampulla toys with the multifarious uses of the word to define this body of work. Notable in his *Half Cut*, 2020, the artist frames a grassy slope, perfectly descending from peak to trough; Rampulla's image both recognizes the geometric spectacle, but offers, as Rampulla puts it, an extension of himself, inviting the viewer to stand from his perspective.

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Rampulla notes a formal shift in this body of work, leaning into familiarity, in setting and in the perception of his figures. Identifying a direct eye contact with his subjects, Rampulla deepens the intimacy of his portraits, presenting a new, more vital, connection. As in *Jonathan, LA, 2017*, a birds-eye view of an undressed, reclined figure; while the subject is entirely exposed, the viewer's gaze draws immediately toward his eyes, at once furthering this human connection and leading the onlooker to question what the subject is thinking. It is this very confrontation that connects Rampulla's practice; each photograph starts with a question Rampulla does not have the answer to, this connection is the answer.

Collapse will be on view at Kapp Kapp, Philadelphia through March 19, 2021.

Daniel Rampulla (b. 1987, San Francisco, CA) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Rampulla received his BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and his MAT in Art Education from New York University's Steinhardt School. Recent exhibitions include *Wild Place*, Chart Gallery, New York; *The Other Is You: Brooklyn Queer Portraiture*, BRIC, New York; and *This Is Not Here*, RE 21, New York.

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