W139

Heaving Room
Initiated by Rustan Söderling
20 November 2026 — 7 February 2027

Opening: Friday 20 November, 19:00–22:00
Regular opening hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 12:00–18:00

With works by Jame St. Findlay, Michelle Chang Qin, Rosa Klerkx, Bin Koh, John Smith, Rustan Söderling, Dan Walwin and Andoni Zamora.



Still from *CRABS* (2026), Rustan Söderling

The group show *Heaving Room*, initiated by Rustan Söderling, explores improvised forms of connection, support, and kinship in a society where shared structures seem to be shifting or unraveling. Through video works, sculptures, an installation, and a series of digital drawings, the exhibition maps personal and provisional ways of responding to this unstable reality. It shows unusual forms of cataloguing, personal rituals, and the unintentional formations of communities.

Without resorting to generalisations or alarmism, the protagonists in the exhibition develop their own logic. The methods they use to gain a sense of control over an intractable world are often idiosyncratic, incomplete, awkward, incomprehensible, slightly out of touch, or infused with melancholic humour, but always human. They reveal how strongly people seek certainty, or at least some kind of coherence.

The artworks in *Heaving Room* are arranged in a dimly lit space that functions as an ephemeral waiting area that, for a brief moment, contains a collection of different beliefs, behaviours, and uneasy alignments. Elements in the space, such as the scaffolding structure covered in translucent tarp in the center, appear makeshift and slightly askew. They evoke the image of abandoned constructions or supporting structures temporarily holding something unstable together.

During the exhibition's running time, *Heaving Room* will be activated through a public programme featuring guided tours and meetings with participating artists, a roleplaying game with Tom K Kemp, and a workshop on doomer food with The Center for Genomic Gastronomy. Lastly, fanzine makers Dark and Stormy will work with visitors on an alternative exhibition catalogue.

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For press inquiries:
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For more information:
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Participating Artists

Dan Walwin's (b. 1986, United Kingdom) work puts emphasis on the simple acts of looking and listening, and observes dissonances in imposing rigid logic onto the actual and physical. From this comes a sense of awkward play, resulting in compositions that contain accidents and sensuousness by design.

Rosa Klerkx (b. 1996, the Netherlands) works with video, performance, photography, and sound, creating layered compositions that explore themes of emptiness, disconnection, alienation, and belonging. Often set in vast landscapes or overlooked interiors, her work uses instructive methods and notation systems to develop loose, slow, and repetitive choreographies. Through this approach, she reflects on how we move through the world—and how we search, quietly, for connection within it.

Michelle Chang Qin (b. 1996, China) works with improvised structures and discarded materials. She translates gestures and spatial expressions observed in sites of production into sculptural forms. Her work reflects the rhythms of repetitive labour in which the body continually adjusts to the task at hand while the mind slips between the immediate and the imagined.

Rustan Söderling (b. 1984, Sweden) is an artist and filmmaker based in Amsterdam. Working with moving images across documentary, fiction, and animation, he explores how images and stories shape our understanding of reality. His work draws on the unstable relationship between technology, cultural narratives, and systems of belief; the place where the distinction between what is recorded, constructed, and imagined becomes increasingly uncertain.

Jame St Findlay (b. Scotland) is an artist and filmmaker whose work deals with themes of collapse, the self, the omnipotence of commerce, and time as a thing that must be passed through. Working across film, sculpture, and composition, St Findlay's practice operates in a zone between the metropolitan and the pastoral, often utilising and combining motifs and imagery from both worlds.

Bin Koh (b. 1990, South Korea) explores how images develop into symbolic orders and take on new meanings across different materials and contexts. She is not so much interested in what an image depicts, but in what happens when an image itself becomes a context that encompasses space and time. Her work draws on instinct, belief, offering, and exchange. Symbols function as a means of preserving and transmitting memory.

Andoni Zamora (b. 1992, Basque Country) works with space and performance, exploring the relationship between perception, reality, and fiction. He uses scripts and real memories to construct site-specific narratives that move between lived experience and representation. The audience's gaze and presence are central to his work, determining how each piece unfolds and how it is experienced.

John Smith's (b. 1952, United Kingdom) films are influenced by conceptual art and experimental approaches to filmmaking, as well as by the storytelling power of spoken language. Over a life spanning career he has developed a body of work that blurs the boundaries between documentary and fiction, and between representation and abstraction. Often starting from everyday situations, his carefully constructed films transform reality and playfully explore how cinema shapes what we see and expect.

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About W139

W139 is a leading production and presentation space for contemporary art in the centre of Amsterdam that has been paving the way for experimentation and new modes of autonomy, self-organisation, and collectivity within the arts for 44 years.

Since its founding in 1979—when the monumental building was squatted by a collective of artists—W139 has remained embedded in an engaged and intergenerational community of makers. As an artist-driven organisation, W139 puts experimentation at the forefront—providing space for artists to take risks and realise experimental, urgent, and ambitious projects.

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