

Low Resolution: Can't See You

Hunter Whitaker-Morrow & Johan Samboní

Curated by Inés Arango-Guingue

ACRE Projects

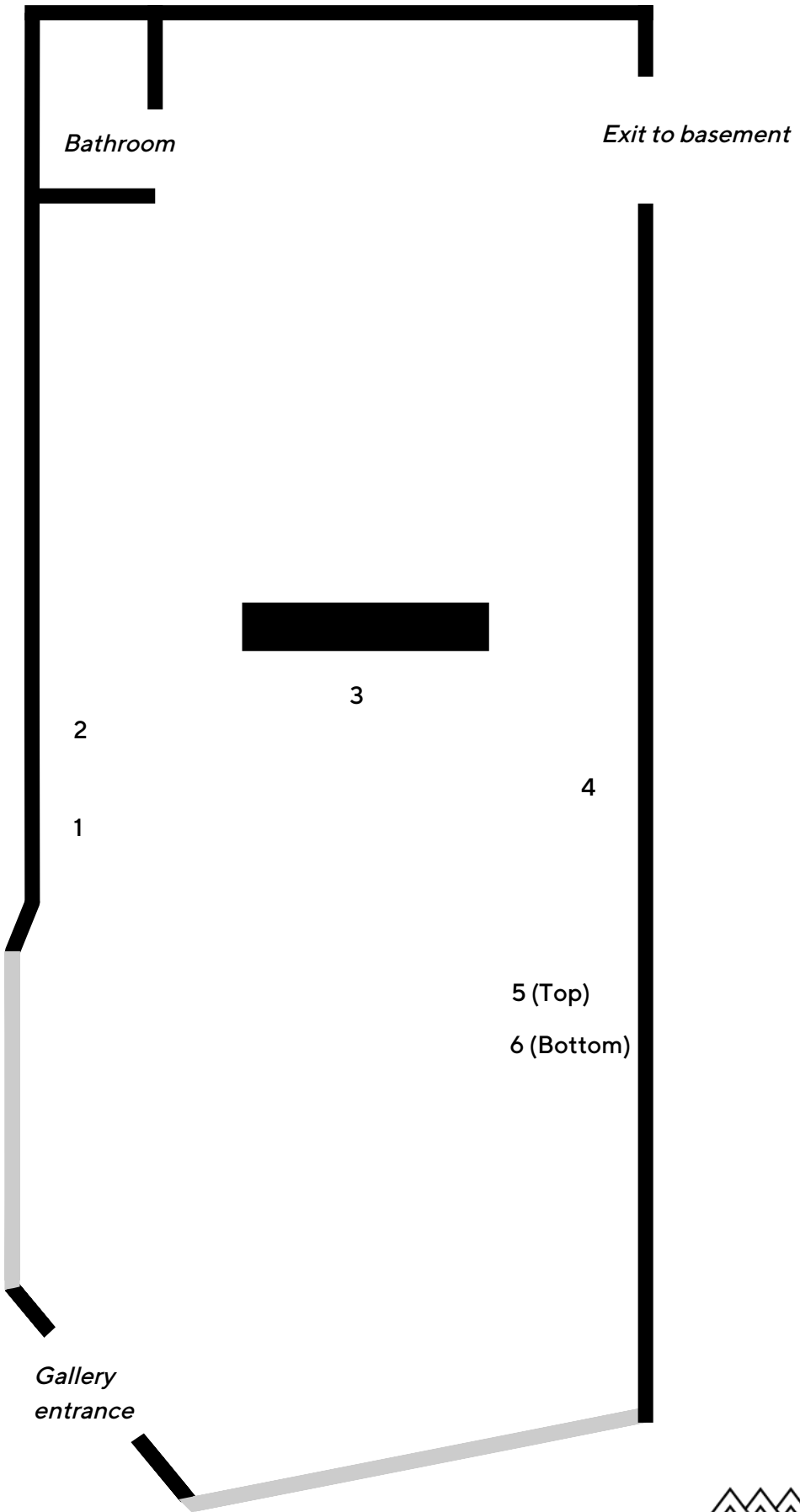
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Low Resolution: Can't See You proposes a dialogue between the recent works of Johan Samboní and Hunter Whitaker-Morrow. Both artists engage with mainstream media, screens, video, and pixels through the filter of their particular cultural and social contexts: Samboní's life in an under-resourced neighborhood in Cali—the Colombian city with the largest Afro-Colombian population—and Whitaker-Morrow's upbringing amidst a family close to the cinema industry in Los Angeles.

The works make use of video, video games, and Hito Steyerl's concept of "the poor image" to confront the perceived neutrality of audiovisual media, highlighting the relationship between low-resolution formats and racialized contexts, as well as refusing "narrative certainty, visual fixity, and temporal closure."

Samboní's pieces in the show draw heavily on the game *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, which was first released in 2004, but was only available to the artist many years later via bootlegged versions in which pixelated images still glitched upon use. By representing these glitches through painting and staging peaceful walks in the otherwise violent video game, Samboní reflects on his access to technology as an afrodescendant in Colombia. His work aims to highlight the term "low resolution" as ambiguous, whereby a piece of low-resolution media can have a relation to a non-resolved issue in the material world. The relationships he and his contemporaries built with American culture and aesthetics—an influx of which was significant through video games specifically—were both cemented and distorted by the necessity to make them make sense in the context of Cali. Thus, the conversation with Whitaker-Morrow, who grew up in California, where *Grand Theft Auto* is supposed to take place, is meant to amplify the dimension of these interregional exchanges.

Whitaker-Morrow's works approach the instability of the image from a different cultural proximity. Through custom software systems authored in Max/MSP/Jitter and processes such as data-moshing, he produces images that collapse in real time. In *Live Signal Mosh Test*, a documentary on legendary jazz drummer Elvin Jones is subject to two different types of custom data moshing, causing pixels to shift improperly and react to the decibels of the video. As Jones' drumming gets louder, the image of his body is destroyed, summoning eerie images of lynching. Whitaker-Morrow's tech expertise in the destabilization of video image both points to the materiality of the medium, while creating images that, by straining visibility, also strain our capacity to conceive mass-media images as neutral.



1. Johan Samboní
Caminata 1/3
2024
Single-channel video
42:02 minutes
2. Johan Samboní
Untitled
2025
Oil on canvas
5 7/8 x 7 7/8 inches
3. Hunter Whitaker-Morrow
Untitled (Realtime System)
2026
Single-channel video generated in real-time by custom Max/MSP/Jitter code, edited television footage, matte vinyl stickers
Dimensions variable
4. Johan Samboní
Algo de ustedes en mí 2
Oil on canvas
19 5/8 x 13 3/4 inches
5. Hunter Whitaker-Morrow
Notation 1 (Synchresis)
2025
Ink on paper
36 x 60 inches
6. Hunter Whitaker-Morrow
Live Signal Mosh Test
2025
Video
13 minutes

About the Artists

Hunter Whitaker-Morrow (b. 1995, Los Angeles, CA) is an artist who works in modes of audiovisual performance, installation, and experimental documentary. His work, both structuralist and conceptual, centers on an exploration of the moving image as socio-historical text and the activation of audiovisual constructions to serve as instruments of cultural supersession. Informed by his academic background in sociology and moving-image theory in concert with a depth of experience working in the television industry, Whitaker-Morrow investigates the physical, technological, and sociopolitical dimensions of audiovisual constructions.

Originally from Los Angeles, he holds an MFA with a concentration in film, video, and new media from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a dual BA in film and media studies and sociology from Amherst College.

Johan David Samboní Esquivel (b. 1995, Cali, Colombia) is an artist from eastern Cali, Colombia whose work examines social realities that are part of his immediate environment, focusing on reflections and questions on the representation of marginality and the identities that inhabit it. He recently participated in the Bogotá and Medellín Biennials, as well as in the Wrong Biennale in Moscow. He held his first solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Medellín (MAMM) and has participated in multiple group exhibitions in spaces such as La Tertulia Museum in Cali, the Museo de Antioquia, Galería Santa Fé and Espacio Odeón in Bogotá, and the Rayo Museum in Roldanillo.

Samboni has been the recipient of different recognitions, such as the C Digital Art Program Award, the National Recognition of the XVII Regional Artist Salons of the Colombian Ministry of Culture, and the Artecámara Award in alliance with El Tiempo, ArtBo 2019. His work is part of the collections of the Banco de la República, Museum of Modern Art of Medellín (MAMM), Museo La Tertulia, Museo Armando Martins in Lisboa, and the Museo Rayo. He holds a Master of Fine Arts from the Departmental Institute of Fine Arts in Cali.

About the Curator

Inés Arango-Guingue is a Colombian curator and writer. In recent years, her research has focused on art and philosophy that acknowledges the social power of the unknown, the opaque, and the illegible.

She is co-curator of *Learning Together: Art Education and Community* at the University of Illinois – Chicago's Gallery 400, a major exhibition centering the progressive art pedagogy of a diverse group of Chicago artist educators from the mid-1960s through the 2010s. In addition, she organized exhibitions at the Mildred's Lane Complex(ity) in Narrowsburg, New York; Museo del Banco de la Republica in Bogotá; Flora Ars + Natura in Bogotá; and Casona de Linea in Havana, Cuba. She was a 2023 Art Table fellow and a 2022 Abakanowicz fellow at SAIC's Institute for Curatorial Research and Practice. She is a contributing author to the upcoming book *Tuning Calder's Clouds*, to be published by The Calder Foundation and the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center.