

An Elsewhere Within Here

Hiba Ali, Alexandra Antoine, Andy Li, Lynnette Miranda, Tamara Becerra Valdez

Curated by Josh Rios

August 4 - 25, 2017

Opening reception: Friday, August 4, 6-9PM

An Elsewhere Within Here: The title of this exhibition is taken from an interview with the postcolonial theorist and visual anthropologist Trinh T. Minh-ha, who describes the simultaneous feeling of belonging and alienation symptomatic of the colonial experience as "...not quite other, not quite the same...[a] situation in which one is always slightly off, and yet not entirely outside." To further explain this sensibility of estrangement, being both inside and outside dominant culture, Minh-ha states: "I've used the term 'elsewhere,' to which I've often added 'within here'—an elsewhere within here." As a concept for framing and understanding the world, "an elsewhere within here" can refer to geopolitical subjectivities displaced via the histories of diasporic struggle; it can refer to the many ways time and history are collapsed into the archive, which is situated in the past (elsewhere in time), while existing in the present (within the here-and-now); it can refer to cultural producers taking up the challenge to work within and against various institutions in the hopes of transforming all-too-settled value systems; it can refer to the general sense of rupture one feels in relation to their own somatic fiction; and finally; it can refer to our relation to global capital as we consume goods and services from far flung regions without any understanding of the processes that make those goods and services mysteriously appear. *An Elsewhere Within Here* features the work of Hiba Ali, Alexandra Antoine, Andy Li, Lynnette Miranda, and Tamara Becerra Valdez—curated by Josh Rios.

...

Hiba Ali is a new media artist and writer based in Chicago, Illinois, United States. She holds two undergraduate degrees from the School of the Art Institute Chicago with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film, Video, New Media and Animation and a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Critical Studies. She has worked with diverse populations and community organizing and employs digital technology in ways that empower people. Her sculptural installations focus on the history of objects that are produced from global circuits and their embedded codes, encompassing both the technological and sociological. She is a graduate student at UT Austin pursuing her MFA degree in Transmedia. She has exhibited in Chicago (IL), New York (NY), Istanbul (TR), Detroit (MI), Ann Arbor (MI), London (UK) and Dubai (UAE).

Alexandra Antoine is an interdisciplinary artist from South Florida who now resides in Chicago, IL. Her work addresses the themes of identity and culture through the use of type, line and portraiture. She uses the portrait as a tool to re/present individuals of the African diaspora

while exploring her relationship to them within the larger narrative of her Haitian identity. She incorporates bold colors and intuitive line gestures to portray the richness and beauty of her people. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts and Art Education from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work has been exhibited around Chicago at institutions such as the Hyde Park Art Center, Roman Susan Gallery, Roots & Culture and the South Side Community Art Center.

Andy Li is a homebody who explores the traces of care in eating, resting, brief utterances. Andy looks deeply at the relationship between softness and scars, investigating obsessive compulsive disorder and constant precarity. Through an engagement with various disciplines including sound, writing, photography, and popular culture, Andy wants to know when fear can become comfort, how failure can allow for implosions under structures that could never fit and for the transferal of kindness.

Lynnette Miranda is a Latinx arts organizer, curator, and writer from Miami, FL, working in Kansas City, MO. She approaches her practice from the perspective of an artist, questioning and challenging established conventions, and an educator, opening up avenues for dialogue and collective knowledge building. Her ongoing research focuses on the social and political role of contemporary art, critically examining social practice, contemporary craft, performance, and new media work. Lynnette aims to center voices of color and of difference through rigorous, yet accessible exhibitions, programs, and writing for audiences beyond the art world. In 2015, she coordinated three art conferences, including The Creative Time Summit: The Curriculum at the Venice Biennale and at Brooklyn's Boys and Girls High School, as well as ART21's Creative Chemistries: Radical Practices for Art + Education at the Park Avenue Armory. Lynnette is currently the 2016-2017 Curator in Residence at Charlotte Street Foundation and a Lecturer in the Fiber Department at the Kansas City Art Institute. Additionally, Lynnette is the founder and a leading member of the Artists of Color Alliance (KC), a collective of self-identifying artists and creatives of color in the Midwest region, and the founder and co-organizer of Present Futures, a collaborative group of educators, artists, curators, and organizers that believe in addressing issues around structural oppression and injustice through contemporary art.

Tamara Becerra Valdez utilizes artistic research through a personal and distinct photographic, sculptural and performative practice influenced by land-based poetics, social practice and the close observation of everyday life. She restages artifacts, seizes overlooked moments and maintains a desire to honor forgotten information and expression found in the urban vernacular. The ephemeral nature of human behavior leaves an impression in her work. The acts of documenting — as photographing, note taking, sound recording, sorting and archiving are essential components to her art practice. Photography has been the foremost medium through which to capture the process and effects of duration, time and temporality in her performative works. In bridging disciplines of archival research, ethnography, archaeology and visual arts, her practice blends intuition with inquiry and affect with historical and contemporary analysis. Valdez earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art with formal studies in Anthropology and Folklore at the University of Texas at Austin in 2008. In 2017, she will begin her Master of Fine Arts in the Moving Image at the University of Illinois at Chicago

(UIC). As a Graduate Research Fellow at UIC, she will join the multidisciplinary initiative Humanities Without Walls to support artistic and creative direction in the new project, “Political Ecology as Practice: A Regional Approach to the Anthropocene.”

Josh Rios is an educator, media artist, and writer whose projects deal with the elided histories, archives, and futurities of Latinx subjectivity and U.S./Mexico relations as understood through the intersections of modernity, postmodernity, and neocoloniality. Rios’s projects highlight moments of anxiety and generativity produced by intercultural contact, estrangement, and scenarios of co-belonging. Recent performances and projects have been featured at the Art Institute of Chicago, Harold Washington College, the Stony Island Arts Bank, the University of Illinois Chicago, Andrea Meislin Gallery (NYC), and the Black Oak House (Philadelphia). Recent writing includes, “A Possible Future Return to the Past,” published through Edinburgh University Press. Upcoming projects include a collaborative exhibition at Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México featuring the archive of Chicanx science fiction and cyberpunk progenitor Ernest Hogan, as well as the group exhibition Monarchs at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts. Rios has taught courses about the US- Mexico borderland, temporality and the cultural history of time, as well as postcolonial and political science fiction.