

Subject To Capital

Curatorial Statement
by Joshua Lubin-Levy

“The object of art – like every other product – creates
a public which is sensitive to art and enjoys beauty.
Production thus not only creates an object for the subject,
but also a subject for the object”
- Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*¹

We are not only subjects of, but also subject to capitalism. This statement will hardly come as a surprise to the reader, and certainly not to those attentive to the preoccupation with capitalism in much of contemporary art. Volumes have been written detailing the many ways capitalism works precisely by exploiting the worker: by paying a wage that offers just enough for those of us subjected to live another day but not enough to dissolve the division between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” Given that art, even today, seems to be perpetually attended by the question of its value (is art worth anything at all?), it has provided a number of artists and theorists with a productive site for interrogating the reproduction and circulation of wealth and value in a variety of forms. Such critiques illuminate the repressive nature of life under capitalism, making legible various facets of a system that operates precisely by keeping its subjects in the dark.

Conceiving of capitalism in this way, while certainly powerful, often entails imagining an abstract system that dominates our everyday lives. Even the word “capitalism” is enough to alienate many readers. Yet if we remember that capitalism is not an impossibly complex economic system, but a lived experience of economic *exploitation*, we may begin to perceive this system as a fundamentally social relation.² Karl Marx famously argues that the violence of the wage is not merely that it is unfair, but that it is founded on the assumption that one individual can sell their labor to another, thereby constituting a subject that accepts an equivalence between life, work and money. What, we might wonder, would it take for us to disentangle this equivalence between *being* and *being exploited*?

“Subject To Capital” begins with the proposition that this

struggle is an inherently queer and feminist practice. Take the notion of the “haves” and the “have-nots,” or more concretely, property and ownership. Especially within the history of the United States, property indicates not only a division between the wealthy and the poor, but also raises questions about the status of women and racial minorities as property; the tactics of dispossession used in the genocide of Native Americans, the waging of global warfare and local practices of gentrification; the privileged relation of the marital contract and the laws inheritance; and perhaps most powerfully the very definition of the human as a subject capable of owning. Along these lines, being subject of and to capitalism means engaging and contesting an ideological subjectivity that is deeply embroiled in structures of patriarchy, heterosexuality and whiteness. Interrupting the subjects and relations of capitalism has always been a project of the queer, feminist, and black outside – subjects who have historically been kept outside the domain of the legible and legal human, property owner.

The tumorous glass sculpture *NEO (plasm)* (2015) by **Doreen Garner** serves as a reminder of the very visceral and violent dimensions of subjugation, particularly in relation to black life. In these outgrowths, which are both self-contained and menacing, Garner presents the viewer with fragments of a human body without realizing its more familiar form. Gorgeous and gory, fragments of hair, petroleum jelly, condoms, beads and other items blend together. As the abnormal growths fold in and around one another, viewer becomes voyeur in an act of looking which itself is subverted by any attempt to partition *Neo (plasm)* into its component parts Garner’s work highlights how the advancement of medical knowledge is historically connected to the dissection, experimentation on, and exposure of black bodies. At this intersection, knowledge is not liberatory but oppressive – a paradox gestured towards in a number of the works included in “Subject To Capital.” .

The consumption of subjects within systems of capitalist exploitation is similarly at the heart of “Second Skin” (2016) by artists **João Enxuto & Erica Love**. Comprised of two large panels of a perforated stainless steel used in the cladding

of a building, “Second Skin” is salvaged from repairs done to the exterior of 41 Cooper Square. A small sample of this perforated steel skin was embedded in acrylic to commemorate the completion of the \$166 million academic building in 2009. A card accompanies this memento attesting to its provenance while illustrating that the building marks a sense of futurity for the university, one comprised of technological advancement and expansion. In fact, a bank loan to pay for 41 Cooper Square has been the major cause of the university’s debt, resulting in the 2014 decision to begin charging tuition after 155 years of offering students free access to higher education. The worn skin presented here illuminates the labor of maintaining the false promise of this monument. Through the financial structures of the university, the student is figured as both a future subject (potential beneficiaries of this expansion) while in the present becoming legible only as a source of income as the university’s debt is displaced onto the student body.³

Sites in which subjects become legible to, and productive for, capitalism inform a number of the works featured in “Subject To Capital.” Pairing capitalist critique with notions of subjectivity, these works are in concert with a range of marxist theories – particularly the work of Louis Althusser. In his essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Towards an Investigation” (1970), Althusser gives the famous “theoretical scene” of interpellation in which a police officer calls out to an individual “Hey, you there!” and in turning around the individual “becomes a *subject*.”⁴ As Althusser argues, in recognizing that the hail is directed at you, in turning around, you become physically and cognitively situated within a system of power. Countering capitalist ideology, in that sense, demands that we interrogate both how we know ourselves as subjects as well as, to borrow from Saidiya Hartman, the scenes of subjection. To propose, as Althusser writes, that the solution is to simply “*get rid of the cop in your head...deserves a place in the Museum of the History of Masterpieces of Theoretical and Political Error.*”⁵ This crude sense of liberating one’s thoughts from repression, as he continues, “quite simply replaces ideas [...] with the cop

[...] replaces the role of subjection played by bourgeois ideology with the repressive role played by the police.”⁶ Alongside Althusser’s caution, the works in “Subject To Capital” resists any direct representation of alternative subjectivities, while at the same time raising questions about the value of ideological debates at a time in which we increasingly inundated with directly repressive violence. Not merely social and symbolic death, but biological death looms large in today’s culture of police violence, global war and rising cost of health care.

The very force of ideological discourse plays a central role in the work of **Aliza Shvarts**, who employs the aesthetics of heavy metal music to probe the sonic materiality of interpretive authority. Shvarts installs a series of QR codes alongside the existing wall labels of the gallery— a familiar strategy of museum and gallery spaces for sharing prerecorded discourse around exhibited works. Rather than finding a traditional audio tour, the listener instead hears a narration of the space that makes use of the low bass frequencies of metal. As Shvarts wrote in a recent article, “Metal is an overwhelmingly white and heteromasculinist subculture. Yet as such, it offers something useful to a prurient queer feminist interest.”⁷ Shvarts inhabits the dual superlatives of metal’s brutality and didacticism’s perspicacity. In doing so, she uses metal as a critical tool to make audible what weighs so heavily in the seeming neutrality of such explanatory text: its interpellative call to established notions of aesthetic value.

Hong-Kai Wang’s *Accept Me for What I Am, If You Want Me* (2009) explores the function of interpellation through various dynamics of politics, gender and nationality. This video work documents a public intervention staged in the streets of Incheon, South Korea in which a van drives around campaigning for a fictional female political candidate from Taiwan. While gesturing towards the twinned political histories of these two nations, the viewer watches as individuals throughout the street are hailed by a series of ambiguous questions posed as political slogans. Countering the declarative statements reminiscent of these campaigns, Wang presents a political subject motivated by the desire for

acceptance. The campaign becomes a locus for the beliefs of its viewers who fill out this political program with what we ourselves desire in the form of answers to these questions.

Operating through discursive exchange, *Hoch Buncher* (2015) is a video work by artist **Baseera Khan** which combines the artist's own transcription of the documentary "The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On," by Kazuo Hara (1987) as well her notes on Walter Benjamin's "Critique of Violence" (1921). Khan becomes the cipher for these texts, constructing a new script that takes the form of a testifier and interrogator relationship. The viewer hears the work read aloud while watching a video of cable wires dancing in a thunderstorm. Lines of communication are blurred as telling one's own history, or the practice of self-disclosure, becomes a fraught if not impossible task of conveying truth to another. The listener is presented with several layers of violence, from war and intimacy, as the script circles around Benjamin's own preoccupation with the duality of a violence that preserves the law and a violence that posits it. As with Wang's political subject, Khan's legal subject is both accountable and exceptional, illuminating the very contingency of these structures of power and the forms of subjectivity that reproduce them.

Another way of understanding this dynamic relationship between capitalism and subjectivity is to say that the principles most valued by capitalism (productivity, efficiency, autonomy and accountability) are often reproduced as the values we seek in one another. Indeed, capitalism not only tells us how to be but also what to want. Noting the way capitalism circumscribes life to a relation with the market, artist **Allan Sekula** writes "[t]hese forces sought to organize people as atomized 'private individuals,' motivated en masse by the prospect of consumption, thus liquidating other dangerously oppositional forms of social bonding."⁸ Illustrating capital's control over the form and function of subjectivity, Allan Sekula's *School Is a Factory* (1978/1980) meditates on the intersection of higher education and the culture industry as systems complicit in upholding existing divisions of labor. Sekula's work resonates with Althusser's claim that the school is

where one acquires both knowledge and knowledge of “the ‘rules’ of good behaviour, that is, the properties to be observed by every agent in the division of labor [...] rules of *respect* for the social and technical division of labor.”⁹

School Is a Factory mimics the form of a college brochure, including familiar imagery depicting the joys of campus life in and out of the classroom. With a bluntness that subdues the more optimistic messages of these marketing materials, Sekula photographs a school that, by all appearances, could be a factory – a space where classrooms provide hands-on training in operating heavy machinery, computer programing, and secretarial work. For the most part, the faces we see offer neutral, if not sullen, and ungiving affections that seem to mark the intrusion of the camera. The photographs are interruptions in the routine of the school day, cuts within the rhythm of a pedagogy that aims to model these individuals for work.

Based on Sekula’s work as a photography professor at a community college, these portraits are paired with images of the landscape of local industries where students may eventually seek employment. In the foreground of these landscapes we see a set of hands holding a cigar and miniature schoolhouse atop a funnel filled with plastic figurines of anonymous bodies. This recurring symbol literalizes the way the schoolhouse *funnels* students into the existing divisions of labor.

Simply reproducing the given relations of production would run the risk of making bearable (and consumable) the conditions of exploitation being depicted. In a postscript to the work, Sekula explicitly writes against this mode of photography, which abstracts and alienates the viewer from real material conditions. Instead, he proposes that *School Is a Factory* is “a kind of political geography, a way of talking, with words and images about both the system and *our* lives within the system.”¹⁰ Each image is accompanied by a caption which (re)tells the story of its content. In this repetition, the unity and authenticity of both text and image are called into question. To see Sekula’s photographs as a form of writing is thus to pay closer attention to the way he uses the apparatus of the camera as a strategy for disarticulating the stranglehold

of this system over the bodies it supposedly captures.¹¹

By diagramming exploitation, *School Is A Factory* participates in and shifts a kind of topographical thinking present throughout a range of marxism. More explicitly, it demonstrates the notion of an economic base which both founds and is maintained by formations in the superstructure (i.e. the Ideological State Apparatuses described by Althusser, including the school, the family, politics, law, religion, culture and the media). Widely and usefully criticized, this idea is often paraphrased from Marx, wrongfully proposes that subjectivity is necessarily determined by, or only ever a product of, capital. Yet to take this metaphor of the edifice as pointing towards the dynamic infrastructure of capital, we get closer to the kind of *political geography* proposed by Sekula. Such mappings provide opportunities to consider capitalism as a condition of relations not only between subjects but with the space around them.

Similarly, **Alan Ruiz**'s work explores formal and perceptual conditions that illuminate the infrastructure of late capitalism. Working site-reflexively, Ruiz transforms a window at Abrons Arts Center into a one-way mirror by installing a film more conventionally used to create the illusion of privacy inside the glass curtain-wall of office buildings. This intervention calls into question legacies of Modernist architecture's pursuit of transparency, suggesting such transparency is a fallacy. In relation to the gallery's other windows, which supposedly give unmediated access into and out of the cultural space of the gallery, the one-way mirror creates a perceptual condition in which the shifting position of the viewer illuminates the dynamic power structure of seeing and being seen, access and refusal. Simultaneously Ruiz installs two clear plastic prison televisions, transparent objects (designed to mitigate against contraband) that although transparent to their technological function in many ways obscure the controlled way in which they control a primary means of communication between the outside world and the interiority of the prison. Installed in the gallery, these televisions become non-functional objects playing a static gray that is as impenetrable as the mirrored-

window. Like Sekula, Ruiz's work similarly works in the interplay between transparency and opacity, exploring formal and perceptual configurations at play in the politics of control.

Intervening in the space of capitalism is fundamental to *Block-Experiments in Cosmococa – program in progress* (1973) - a series of immersive participatory environments conceived of by Brazilian artist **Hélio Oiticica** and filmmaker **Neville D'Almeida**, during Oiticica's self imposed exile in New York City (1971 – 1978). Implemented in the privacy of Oiticica's loft, each block consists of a soundtrack, a script of performative actions for viewer participation, a selection of props and other items (such as hammocks) that inform the way viewers inhabit these environments, and a series of slides shown on loop and projected on various surfaces. Prominently featured in many of the slides are images of cocaine powder cut into graphic formations atop the surface of various books and magazines. This work is presented in "Subject To Capital" by way of two C-prints mounted on aluminum from the *Cosmococa* slideshows, one featuring Marilyn Monroe and the other Jimi Hendrix.

In spite of the charged references and array of materials, the *Cosmococas*, as Sabeth Buchmann and Max Jorge Hinderer Cruz write, "address not the fleeting gaze of the thrill-seeker, but a long-term inhabitant who is open to contingent experience [...] what both Minimalism and the *Cosmococas* share is an interest in how the viewer perceives: the challenge is patently to neither look passively nor 'stare romantically'; this art clearly intends to support neither sublimated commodity consumption nor identification with the values of high culture."¹² Unbounded by the momentary strike of enlightened viewership, the work instead activates a different sensorial experience of art, soliciting a complicity between producer and consumer in the constitution of the work.

Contemplation and consumption take on a particular valence in relation to the presence of the cocaine. Max Jorge Hinder Cruz's work has been instrumental in conceiving of the ways the presence of cocaine pushes these images beyond the merely representational, calling "the contradiction of legality

and ethics permanently at stake in the handling of cocaine.”¹³ Of this medium, Oiticica himself writes:

“the COKE copies the surface (uncritical of its plagiarism) playing playing: (petit bourgeois values lost in discussions who did this or that before...) and to think that some <<artists>> submit their own work to an evaluation grounded in falsities and infantile class hang-ups: if that which is supposedly superior (presumably the work in this case) can be submitted to such discrepancies then it cannot be the work: it may well be work but it will never be SOMETHING NEW: S-O-M-E-T-H-I-N-G-N-E-W...”¹⁴

As Oiticica explains, cocaine as a medium offers a mode of unselfconscious plagiarism. The form of the white lines are informed by the preexisting surface of the image. This, in turn, refuses the very bourgeois values of authorship, authenticity and authority. At the same time, the drive towards self-abandonment is mirrored in the neurological disinhibition offered by cocaine-as-drug and the perpetual negation of each iteration of lines as Oiticica and D’Almeida consume and redistribute the coke. Even the figure of Marilyn Monroe, more readily associated with Andy Warhol’s screen prints, points to work of art suspended in progress (not to mention Oiticica’s criticism commercialization of queer arts). “[T]he glory and fall of MARILYN MONROE,” Oiticica writes, “where IMAGE’s supposed unity fragments itself by resisting the stereotype that attempts to define and limit it leading in most cases to frustration and catastrophe: something had to happen.”¹⁵ *Block-Experiments in Cosmococa – program in progress* (1973) employs the strategy of immersing the viewer in an installation designed to sustain the possibility of *something* happening beyond more confining relationships to the self and subjectivity. And yet, it also shares in the work Allan Sekula describes of “break[ing] with the cult of the self-sufficient visual image.”¹⁶

Two installations included in “Subject To Capital” share in this practice of producing environments that unmoor the conventional scenes of our subjugation. *Capital Improvements* presents a new installation in the Culpepper Gallery of Abrons

Arts Center by artist **Kembra Pfahler**, continuing her ongoing work of availabism – making the best of what’s available. The title refers to an addition or alteration made to property that increases the property’s value. Landlords often claim “Major Capital Improvements” as a means of increasing the stabilized rent of protected tenants, raising the larger question of who actually benefits from the accumulating value of property. In her artwork and through her band *The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black*, Pfahler demonstrates a longstanding commitment an aesthetics of low tech props and costume, and the use of the body as a site. Pfahler’s work opens up the possibility of ingenuity as a queer and feminist practice of self-making and remaking against the confining relations of given identity formations and the structures of power that often overwhelm and seem to dominate everyday life.

Located in the Upper Main Gallery of Abrons Arts Center, **Jennifer Moon & laub** present *Phoenix Rising, Part 3: laub, me and The Revolution (Theory of Everything)* (2015). Originally presented at Commonwealth & Council (Los Angeles, CA), this series of diagrams, models, science displays and video mirrors a laboratory in which Moon & laub present an experiment in expansive relation love that extends beyond the constricting affective relations of capitalism. In the video *3CE: A Relational Love Odyssey*, the viewer is invited to embark on this journey into revolutionizing the boundaries between selves, while the *JLS (Jennifer laub Smasher)* and *GFT (Gut Fairies Transplant)* present schematic proposals for conceiving of merger, inside and out, as a way of breaking down the compulsion to be an autonomous and self-contained individual within the structures of neoliberalism.

Lastly, the work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres is not represented in “Subject To Capital,” though it has, nonetheless, been instructive for my thinking. In particular, it had been my hope to exhibit “*Untitled*” (*Monument*) (1989), which features two take-away stacks of printed sheets one proclaiming “Memorial Day Weekend” and the other “Veterans Day Sale.” As with all of Gonzalez-Torres take-away pieces, “*Untitled*” (*Monument*) functions through the process of its own

disappearance. Visitors are invited to touch and take the art with them. As the stack of paper diminishes it is replenished by the host institution, thereby ensuring that the monument's duration is tied to timeframe of its exhibition.

These work are often noted for their ephemerality. The form of the work is its perpetual disappearance, which in many ways functions as a counterpoint to the durability and perpetuity often expected of works of art. That the life span of a work is circumvented by its own display (it disappears precisely by being exhibited) presents a fundamental contradiction to the visibility of this visual art – suspending the work somewhere between its production and its consumption. Yet, this disappearing act is more than merely a subversion of art historical precedents. Gonzalez-Torres use of ephemerality mobilizes and obscures more conventional associations between art and identity – to living with HIV/AIDS, to queerness, to *cubanía*. Referencing an interview between Gonzalez-Torres and Tim Rollins in which the artist describes navigating the expectations placed upon him as a “Latino,” critic and theorist José E. Muñoz writes, “[b]y refusing to invoke identity, and instead to connote it, he is refusing to participate in a particular representational economy. He does not counter negative representations with positive ones, but instead absents himself and his work from this dead-end street.”¹⁷ To disappear, to become invisible, presents an “obstacle to facile conceptions of identity”¹⁸ and the dominant paradigm which “positions minority identity designations within a syntax of equivocations [race, gender, class, sexuality] that defers the work of theorizing relations of power.”¹⁹

Similarly, one might speculate about the durability this untitled work as a monument. Unlike other attempts to topple the monuments of history with a single blow, Gonzalez-Torres disintegrating monument creates a condition in which the work diminishes slowly, through a series of interactions and exchanges. It is both curious and poignant that the art institution must constantly sustain the conditions for loss and disintegration to occur.

Or perhaps we might say the moment is within an

impossible process of formation – completed only when the last instance of its existence is finally taken away. Here, the shifted temporality of Gonzalez-Torres' work sheds light of Marx's own desire for "a reader who is willing to learn something new and therefore to think for [onself]."²⁰ Thinking freely hardly occurs at a glance, but rather like "*Untitled*" (*Monument*), gradually forms through time, through sustained engagement and through a willingness to develop a "knowledge' altogether different from repressive-authoritarian knowledge."²¹

"Subject To Capital" propose nothing like a concrete answer or thesis. Rather it suggests that if we are stuck with capitalism, then capitalism is stuck with us – it flows through us as pedestals and frameworks that sustain its very function. In that same interview with Tim Rollins, Felix Gonzalez-Torres offer what I take to be his approach to this contradiction – precisely through art and theory as "queer thing[s]" instrumental in producing "pleasure through knowledge and some understanding of the way reality is constructed, of the way the self is formed in culture, of the way language sets traps, and of the cracks in the 'master narrative' – those cracks where power can be exercised." He goes on to state, in the same passage Muñoz quotes from:

"Felix: Last but not least, Brecht is an influence. I think if I started this list of influences again it would start with Brecht. I think this is really important because as Hispanic artists we're supposed to be very crazy, colorful – extremely colorful. We are supposed to 'feel,' not think. Brecht says to keep a distance to allow the viewer, the public, time to reflect and think. When you get out of the theater you should not have had a catharsis, you should have had a thinking experience. More than anything, break the pleasure of representation, the pleasure of the flawless narrative. This is not life, this is just a theater piece. I like that a lot: This is not life, this is just an artwork. I want you, the viewer, to be intellectually challenged, moved, and informed.

Tim: Some people don't like that.

Felix: Of course not because they have an investment in the narrative."²²

Endnotes

- 1 Karl Marx. *Grundrisse*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 92.
- 2 Louis Althusser. *On The Reproduction of Capitalism* (New York: Verso, 2014), 125. Published posthumously: “the material basis...for the existence of every capitalist social formation is *economic exploitation* – economic exploitation, *not repression*.”
- 3 For more information visit: <http://freecooperunion.org/>
- 4 Althusser, 264.
- 5 Ibid, 178.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 <http://www.brooklynrail.org/2015/02/criticspage/black-wedding>
- 8 Allan Sekula. “The Politics of Education and the Traffic in Photographs” in *Photography Against The Grain: Essays and Photo Works 1973 – 1983*. (Nova Scotia: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1984), 226.
- 9 Althusser, 51.
- 10 Sekula, 234.
- 11 Sekula makes the photograph useful, conceding to Walter Benjamin’s declaration, in his essay “The Author As Producer,” that “what we demand from the photographer is the ability to put such a caption beneath his picture as will rescue it from the ravages of modishness and confer upon it a revolutionary use value. And we shall lend greater emphasis to this demand if we, as writers, start taking photographs ourselves.” (95) Here Benjamin is writing of problematic way in which photographs transfigure material conditions, rendering consumable even the most nefarious of social and political contexts or environments. Simple re-presenting the world is not enough for Benjamin, the world must be rewritten.
- 12 Sabeth Buchmann and Max Jorge Hinderer Cruz. *Hélio Oiticica and Neville D’Almeida: Block-Experiments in Cosmococa – Program in Progress*. (London: Afterall Books, 2013), 38.
- 13 Buchmann and Cruz, 67. Max Jorge Hinderer Cruz’s work on Oiticica has been highly instructive for my writing and in particular, his attention to cocaine not only as a drug prevalent in the 1970s artworld, but deeply tied to a colonial past of conditioning the productivity of colonized subjects. For more, *The Long Memory of Cocaine* (https://potosiprincipleprocess.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/noid_paper_final_spr_cropmarks_low.pdf)
- 14 Hélio Oiticica. “Block-Experiments in Cosmococa-Program in Progress” in *Hélio Oiticica: Quasi-Cinemas*, ed. Carlos Basualdo (Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2001), 99.
- 15 Oiticica, 100.
- 16 Sekula, 230.
- 17 José E. Muñoz. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 166.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid, 167.
- 20 Karl Marx. *Capital: Volume 1*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 90.
- 21 Althusser, 180.
- 22 Tim Rollins. “Interview with Felix Gonzalez-Torres” in *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, ed William S. Bartman. (New York: A.R.T. Press, 1993), 19.

Artist Bios

D-L Alvarez works through drawing, sculpture, video, and prose to extend the psychological and political potency of particular historical moments via imagery representing them. The images are never as found, rather they endure distortions: blurring, doubling, folds and degradations. He does this to mimic the way loaded representation exceeds the viewer's ability to fully process its significance, as well as to echo the way each history is scripted with the bias of its author. His own history includes chapters of working with experimental and deaf theater companies, AIDS activism, San Francisco, New York, Berlin, and frequent collaborative work. He exhibits internationally (Spain, Italy, Germany, the UK, the US, Latvia, France, Mexico, and South Africa), and his art can be found in the collections of the SF and NY MoMA, the Whitney, Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archives. His next solo-exhibition is scheduled for next winter at Derek Eller's new space in the Lower East Side.

Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas is a theater-maker based in New York and Artistic Director of the Obie winning company Fulcrum Theater. His most recent solo-performance piece, *Backroom*, was presented at the Whitney Museum of American Art. His play, *Bird in the Hand*, was a New York Times Critics Pick and is published by Dramatic Publishing. His play *Blind Mouth Singing*, also a New York Times Critics Pick, completed runs at Chicago's Teatro Vista, and the National Asian American Theatre Company (NYC), productions The Chicago Tribune praised as having "visionary wit" and that The New York Times called "strange and beautiful". His many awards include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York Foundation for the Arts; as well as the Helen Merrill Award; the Anschutz Distinguished Fellowship at Princeton University; "playwright of the year" in El Nuevo Herald's 1999 year-end list; a Writers Community Residency from the YMCA National Writer's Voice; and the Robert Chesley Award, among others. He has been commissioned by the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory and Playwrights Horizons. He is a Usual Suspect at New York Theatre Workshop and an alumnus of New Dramatists. He teaches playwriting at Bard College.

João Enxuto and Erica Love collaborate on projects that focus on the art field, its systems of valuation, and the datalogical structure of exhibition spaces, institutions, and built environments. They have given talks, written essays, and exhibited at the Whitney Museum of Art, Anthology Film Archives, Walker Art Center, Pratt Institute, Yossi Milo Gallery, Carriage Trade, Vox Populi, Georgia State University, Louisiana Museum in Denmark, and the Tamayo Museum in Mexico City. Enxuto and Love were fellows at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program for 2012–2013. Their writing has appeared in *Wired Magazine*, *Mousse Contemporary Art Magazine*, *X-TRA Contemporary Art Quarterly*, and *Initiales*, among others. João Enxuto received an MFA in Photography from RISD and Erica Love received an MFA in New Genres from UCLA.

Doreen Garner (b.1986) is a Brooklyn-based artist born in Philadelphia, PA. Select exhibitions include “SHINY RED PUMPING,” Vox Populi Gallery, Philadelphia, PA (2015), “Abjection” at the Rhode Island College Bannister Gallery, Providence, RI (2014), “Pussy Don’t Fail Me Now,” Cindy Rucker Gallery, NY (2015) and “Something I can Feel” curated by Derrick Adams at Volta Art Fair (2016). Garner has recently completed residencies at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (2015) and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2014). She holds a BFA in Glass from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University and an MFA in Glass at the Rhode Island School of Design. Currently Garner is a 2015-2016 Artist in Residence at Abrons Arts Center and Van Lier Fellow at Wave Hill.

Baseera Khan is a New York based artist. Her visual and written work focuses on performing patterns of emigration and exile that are shaped by economic, social, and political changes throughout the world with special interests in decolonization practices. Khan is preparing for her first solo exhibition at Participant Inc., New York City (2016). She was an artist-in-residence at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Artist Residency, Skowhegan, Maine (2014). She was recently an International Fellow in Israel/Palestine through Apexart,

(Khan Cont.) New York City (2015) and an artist in residence at Process Space Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (2015). Khan is currently part-time faculty at Parsons, The New School Design. She received her M.F.A. at Cornell University (2012).

Within realities constructed by normative modes of representation, **Jennifer Moon and laub** are artists with the appropriate degrees to signify them as such. Within realities of the impossible, the unknown, and the unimaginable, Jennifer Moon is an android-like humanoid creature from outer space. laub is a magic-infused wood nymph from an alternate dimension. Every lifetime, Jennifer and laub meet in a serendipitous manner to realize revolution; and every lifetime, so far, they (Moon & laub cont.) they eventually get co-opted into the system, sometimes by seeming choice, sometimes by oppressive force, and sometimes one of them gets co-opted and the other must kill the other. After each deaths, they take what they have learned from past lives and leave their reborn selves clues to expand beyond previous unexpansive behaviors and co-option, which detour their quest for revolution. laub and Jennifer have faith that revolution already exists in everyone.

The work of Brazilian artist **Hélio Oiticica** (1937–1980) figures centrally in the postwar Latin American avant-garde, in queer underground experimental performance and in conceptual and somatic practices of fellow artist working in a post-minimalist, post-Pop context. Most readily associated with the Rio de Janeiro based neo-concretist movement, Oiticica's formation of "the concept of Tropicália set a precedent for exploring the way Latin America art figures within the context of modernist art discourse, working through and against the principles of cultural appropriation and essentialism. Elaborating on the idea for a film by Brazilian underground filmmaker **Neville D'Almeida**, Oiticica developed the concept for *Block-Experiments in Cosmococa—Program in Progress* (1973–1974). Presented publicly for the first time in 1992, these works have been included in major international exhibitions in Los Angeles, Chicago, London, and New York.

Kembra Pfahler is an artist and rock musician, best known as the painted lead singer of The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black, a theatrical death rock band she co-founded in 1990. The band uses music, drawings and films to spread a clear message of love in a beautiful, tsuristic, anti-natural, and fearless way to dispel the antiquated notion that there is a hierarchy of artistic mediums. Pfahler follows the philosophy of availabism, making the best of what's available. Exhibitions include: The Manual of Action, Lisa Bowman Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, 2015; Future Feminism, The Hole, New York, NY, 2014; Fuck Island, Participant Inc., New York, 2012; Giverny: E.V. Day & Kembra Pfahler in Monet's Garden, The Hole, New York, NY, 2012; Heaven & Hell, Deitch Projects at Bas Fisher Invitational, Miami, FL, 2007. Pfahler currently runs Performance Art 101, a course based on availabism

Alan Ruiz is a visual artist whose work explores the intersection of site-reflexivity, architectural discourse, and urban policy. Engaging constructed space as a perceptual and a political medium, his projects have been shown both nationally and internationally, including in exhibitions at Wave Hill, the Bronx Museum of the Arts (NYC); Ortega Y Gasset Projects (NYC); Y Gallery (NYC) ; Horatio Jr. (London, UK); Johannes Vogt Gallery (NYC); Tape Modern (Berlin, Germany); Andrew Edlin Gallery (NYC) Y; and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) Building 110, Governors Island (NYC). Forthcoming exhibitions include the "Queens International," Queens Museum, Queens, NY. Ruiz has participated in residencies with the Whitney Museum of American Art's Youth Insights Program, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, The Art & Law Program, AIM, and the Yale Norfolk Summer School for Art and Music. His work has been featured in *TDR (MIT Press)*, *BOMB Magazine*, *InVisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture*, *Architizer*, *Hyperallergic*, *Purple Diary* and he is a contributing editor to *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*. He received an MFA from Yale University and a BFA from Pratt Institute, and is a 2015 - 2016 participant in the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program.

Allan Sekula is a renowned photographer, theorist, historian of photography and writer. His work is concerned with the consequences of the economic changes arising from globalization and questions the function of documentary photography in the media, in art and in society. Sekula has a unique, intelligent, and formally rigorous perspective toward the tradition of social or critical realism, a photographic lineage that stretches back to Lewis Hine. Often depicting labor within the workplace, he has developed a visual language, which describes people both in their individuality and in a more human condition.

Aliza Shvarts is an artist and writer whose work deals broadly with queer and feminist understandings of reproductive labor and temporality. She holds a BA from Yale University and completing a PhD in Performance Studies at NYU. Her artwork has appeared in venues including MoMA PS1 in New York and the Tate Modern, and has been the subject of recent work by Carrie Lambert-Beatty, Wendy Steiner, Joseph Roach, and Jennifer Doyle. Her writing has been published in *TDR: The Drama Review*, *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*. She was a 2014–2015 Helena Rubinstein Fellow in Critical Studies at the Whitney Independent Study Program and a 2014 recipient of the Creative Capital | Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant. Currently, she teaches at Parsons/The New School and is a Joan Tisch Teaching Fellow at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Born in Huwei, Taiwan, **Hong-Kai Wang** is an artist and researcher based in Vienna and Taipei. She is a PhD in Practice candidate at Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and part of the History from Below Network. Her interdisciplinary practice is driven by a preoccupation with listening and sound as research methodologies, modes of collaboration, and pedagogical tools. Spanning sound work, video installation, performance, workshop and publication, her works are consistently concerned with organizing sociality, disrupting accepted geopolitical chronologies, and complicating conception of knowledge. Wang has presented her work internationally at Kunsthalle Wien,

(Wang cont.) Parasophia Kyoto International Festival Contemporary Culture, Kunsthall Trondheim, Para Site, Museum of Modern Art New York, IASPIS, the 54th Venice Biennale, Casino Luxembourg among others

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Special Thanks

Jonathan Durham

Zhen Xieu

Maedhbh McCullagh

The Estate of Allan Sekula

MACK Book

Sally Stein

Ina Steiner

Commonwealth & Council

Young Chung

Visual AIDS

Nelson Santos

Alex Fiahlo

Galerie Lelong

The Estate of Hélio Oiticica

Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory

A PRODUCT OF

LUMPEN: A Journal of Queer Materialism