

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Southern Exposure (SoEx) is a non-profit, visual arts organization dedicated to presenting diverse, contemporary art, arts education, and related programs in an accessible environment. Established in 1974, SoEx supports artists and youth—whether they are teaching, exhibiting, curating, or learning—in developing and presenting new work and ideas. SoEx evolves in response to the needs of artists and the community, engaging the public in the artists' work. Activities range from the commissioning and presentation of local, regional, and international visual artists' work through exhibitions, public art projects, arts education programs, grants, residencies, projects, discussions, performances, and workshops.

Exhibitions Program

SoEx offers artists the chance to experiment, exposes them to new audiences, and engages them in meaningful conversation with other artists and the public. We cultivate emerging artists whose work questions and challenges existing assumptions, shows great promise, and contributes to a larger cultural dialog. Exhibitions are developed by an artist-run Curatorial Committee made up of a rotating group of 8 artists and two staff members. SoEx always commissions new work from the artists in our programs, pays competitive honoraria and publishes critical writing about their work.

Artists in Education Program

SoEx's nationally recognized Artists in Education (AIE) program brings together diverse youth, artists, schools and organizations in a dynamic series of interactions. AIE offers youth opportunities for critical, artistic, vocational and cultural experiences beyond the traditional school environment. It also presents professional teaching opportunities for local emerging artists, enabling them to become arts educators and extending their practice into the community. Sparking a dialog on contemporary artistic practice and sociopolitical issues, AIE illustrates the role of artists in society and uses the conceptual underpinnings of SoEx's exhibition programs to provide new means of expression for youth. Each year, SoEx works with more than 150 youth between the ages of 14 and 21 and employs nearly 20 teaching artists. In the age of decreased art-centered curricula in public schools and a lack of positive, creative outlets for youth, AIE fills a crucial need in the community.

SoEx's Alternative Exposure Grant Program

One of our main goals is to support the creative development of artists so they are able to live and work in the Bay Area. Alternative Exposure, SoEx's grant program created in partnership with the AndyWarhol Foundation for the Arts, provides up to

\$3,500 in direct support to artists or groups of artists making and presenting work in a committed but informal way. Projects can include an exhibition or exhibition series, a public art project, a one time event or performance, the ongoing work of a venue or collective, the publication of writing directly related to the visual arts, an online project or publication, an artist residency, a series of teaching opportunities and more. By the end of 2010, SoEx will distribute \$220,000 in direct funding to nearly 70 distinct projects since launching the program in 2007.

Public Art/SoEx Off-Site

SoEx Off-Site commissions new temporary work throughout the Bay Area that intervenes and interacts in the social and political spheres beyond the gallery. SoEx is one of only a few local organizations committed to supporting emerging artists working in the public realm.

Public Programs & Events

Projects, workshops, performances, talks, screenings, education programs, and discussions create a forum on contemporary issues and are designed to expand on ideas and issues presented in concurrent projects. We provide access to affordable art through our Monster Drawing Rally, Auction and limited editions art works program.

MARCH 11 - APRIL 23, 2011

SOEX EVENTS, PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS

Opening Reception for *On the Ground*

Friday, March 11, 2011

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm • FREE

Join Southern Exposure and the artists in *On the Ground* in celebrating the opening of this groundbreaking exhibition.

Under the Influence of Love

A live performance and release of ChuCha Santamaría y Usted's self-titled first album

Saturday, April 9, 2011 • 8:00pm • FREE

Celebrate the release of ChuCha Santamaría y Usted's self-titled debut album with the performance extravaganza, *Under the Influence of Love*. Featuring the unforgettable ChuCha herself in a never-before-seen show of psychedelic projections, special effects and multiple costume changes, the musical duo transports the audience to a dance floor where mainland-tinged dreams of success come to life in the pulsing rhythms of the music.

LP's will be available for sale.

Mi Nueva Nacion: Sights and Sounds of Punks in Contemporary Mexico

An artist's talk and live punk performance

Thursday, March 24, 2011

7:30 pm • FREE

In *Mi Nueva Nacion: Sights and Sounds of Punk in Contemporary Mexico*, artist Juan Luna-Avin traces the history of punk music in Mexico from the late 1970s to the present. Punk ideology, while primarily identified with rebellion, individualism, and free thought, was influential for the cultural, social and political movements taking place. Luna-Avin presents this history in a lecture format, accompanied by lively music samples, diy videos and interviews of key characters from the scene.

Punk band Desmadre en Crisis follows the lecture with a live set.

Sipping Session: Artist-made Beverages

Part of Lunar Mission, a night of collaborative event programming from seven galleries in the South East Mission. With Lauren Anderson, Eric Cabunoc, Mariah Gardner, Pete Nelson and Alison Pebworth.

Saturday, March 19, 2011

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Sips by Donation

For *Sipping Session*, Southern Exposure is transformed into a convivial gathering place for drinking and conversation, operating like a public house for one night. Each of the participating artists work to create a beverage, often distilled from local ingredients. Because the drinks these artists serve are an extension of their creative practice, each beverage made operates as a work of art.

Sipping Session is SoEx's contribution to Lunar Mission, a collaboration between seven galleries in the immediate neighborhood including Galeria de la Raza, Guerrero Gallery, Eleanor Harwood Gallery, Gallery Hijinks, Southern Exposure, Triple Base, and Steven Wolfe Fine Arts, all presenting concurrent programming on March 19, 2011.

- Sergio De La Torre** *Nuevo Dragon City*, 2008
Video
14 minutes
- Malak Helmy** *Statements from the Compound*, 2011
Mixed media installation
Dimensions variable
- Juan Luna-Avin** *CMPEM-MNSOADO/VNETLQSPSTLQE (NSEOIO)*, 2011
Mixed media timeline
Dimensions variable
- UNTITLED (DGNPQLR)*, 2011
Mixed media 2D installation
Dimensions variable
- iSOMOS LOS DESMADERNIZADORES! MUSICA PUNK EN MEXICO (1978 - 2011)*, 2011
Listening station
Dimensions variable
- Jerome Reyes** *Flash Mab*, 2011
Spray paint, painter's tape, ink, corrective fluid on vellum, MP2 player, vintage headphones
8' x 6'
- Rene Yung** *Whereas—A Declaration of Place*, 2011
Mixed media installation
Dimensions variable

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

- Taha Belal** *Advertisements*, 2011
Printed paper
Dimensions variable
- Gaye Chan** *Free Grindz*, 2011
Wood, steel, seeds, electoral
campaign banners, rubber stamps,
and paper
8' x 10'
- Sofia Cordova** *Baby, Remember My Name*, 2010-2011
Mixed media installation
- Fiebre Tropical (Tropical Fever)*, 2010
Video
3:09 minutes
- Dip-Si Dai-Ver (Deep Sea Diver)*, 2010
Video
4:25 minutes
- Grito de Lares Ridox
(Cry of Lares Redux)*, 2010
Video
5:23 minutes
- Fanta Fabuloso*, 2011
Video
4:19 minutes

ON THE GROUND

BY WESTON TERUYA

In a scene midway through the fourth season of the acclaimed television drama *The Wire*, Chris Partlow and Snoop, enforcers for drug kingpin Marlo Stanfield, stalk dark Baltimore alleys on a mission to weed out the New York interlopers edging in on their territory. After a quick debate over how to identify their outsider targets, Partlow ultimately settles on questioning corner boys about the specifics of local club music to check credentials. During their interrogations, the invocation of a 92Q radio station deejay eventually saves the life of one perplexed local dealer while a defiant New Yorker receives a quick bullet when he revealingly fails to recognize the name of Baltimore rapper *Young Leek*. This scene suggests in rather stark terms the tensions of access, commerce, labor and property that intersect and underwrite the concept of belonging. It also highlights the way that those issues can be negotiated through the codes and nuances of localized culture: in this case, pop music and its related figures. The show's creators themselves simultaneously utilized their own familiarity with Baltimore politics, history and cultural character to shape the fictive narrative of the series, including this particular scene. Much of the praise granted to the series cites this insider knowledge, the specific portrait of a city that compels viewers to engage in broader conversations about public policy and community life.

On the Ground presents work arising from a group of artists' relationship to particular localities. San Francisco. O'ahu. Cairo. The North coast of Egypt. Tijuana. Puerto Rico and its diaspora. Mexico City, Puebla, Monterrey and Queretaro. The artists build from the specific codes and nuances of these places, creating their own narratives and gestures that begin to reveal or reimagine their communities. Whether through community engagement, →

WESTON TERUYA was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawai'i. He joined Southern Exposure's Curatorial Committee in 2009. He has exhibited artwork at Patricia Sweetow Gallery and Intersection for the Arts in San Francisco, the de Saissett Museum in Santa Clara and the di Rosa Preserve in Sonoma. In 2011, he will be exhibiting at Pro Arts in Oakland, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco and the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center. Weston has had residencies at the Montalvo Arts Center and Oliver Ranch Studio Artist Residency and was a recipient of a 2009 Artadia grant. He received an MFA in Painting and Drawing and MA in Visual & Critical Studies from California College of the Arts.

historical research, musical performance or language, each artist delves into a specific facet of a site's cultural structure.

In both title and concept, *On the Ground* suggests a pedagogical impulse; as in "on the ground reporting." However, unlike the mandate of *The Wire* to entertain and perhaps inform audiences (co-creator David Simon comes from a background in investigative journalism), the artists in *On the Ground* take varied approaches to this possible process of revelation. Some projects, such as Rene Yung's engagement with the neighborhood surrounding Southern Exposure, strike a declarative tone. Utilizing the legalistic language of contract preambles, she asks local residents and business owners to create their own "whereas" statements defining their relationship to, and stakes in, the constantly shifting community around them. Sergio de la Torre's and Jerome Reyes's projects begin to unpack tumultuous and often hidden social histories by framing haunting moments in storefront spaces in Tijuana and San Francisco's Manilatown/ Chinatown respectively. The emotional resonance of the works suggests legacies of social inequity and the persistent struggle for justice and survival. Gaye Chan's installation gives a glimpse into her continuing *Eating In Public* project that defiantly creates an unsanctioned reuse and sharing network on the island of O'ahu in Hawai'i.

Other projects, such as Malak Helmy's, challenge the easy transmission of knowledge about a site through its process of translation, filtration and reformation. Her installation, an architectural model generated from text inspired by Egypt's Northern coast, questions the simple re-presentation of an original site in another location. Helmy's project brings to mind the aforementioned scene in *The Wire*, where Chris Partlow and Snoop hunt for New York trespassers. In a moment of confusion, Snoop herself demonstrates an apathy and unfamiliarity with the terms of Baltimore music when she almost assaults a local dealer despite his valid answer. Club music isn't part of her terms for belonging in Baltimore. As with Helmy's project, this scene demonstrates that local knowledge is uneven and varied and the culture of a place is under constant negotiation. Similarly, Juan Luna-Avin's



Rene Yung,
*Our Oakland:
Eastside Stories*,
2010

RENE YUNG WHEREAS – A DECLARATION OF PLACE

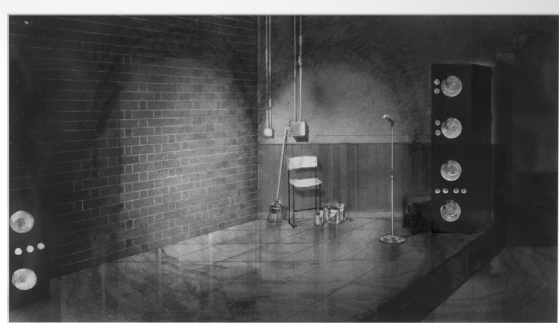
Debates about property and territory have coursed through The Mission for years, traveling through both formal and informal channels to address issues of gentrification and development as well as gang territories and street vendor economies. Who belongs? Who gets to determine the character of the neighborhood? Who shapes development? Who creates the historical narrative? Rene Yung engages the neighborhood around Southern Exposure by consulting individual residents and business owners and beginning to map out a collective answer to some of these questions. Yung began by looking at the governmental and legal terms used to define space and create binding agreements. Centering the project on Southern Exposure itself, she worked with the planning department's definition of an impacted area—the surrounding communities affected by a new development in their midst. She then utilized the "whereas" statements that rhythmically structure contractual preambles to spark interviews with community members. Residents created their own whereas statements that shaped the installation in *On the Ground*, drawing upon their collective histories as a means of negotiating a future together.

RENE YUNG is an internationally exhibiting artist, designer, thinker, and writer, whose cross-disciplinary works combine the poetic and the incisive. She specializes in civic engagement and heritage reclamation projects that help communities to address social and cultural issues in the local environment. A native of Hong Kong, Yung thrives amidst cross-cultural dynamics and has worked with diverse global communities.

Yung has exhibited at venues including TransCulture, part of the 46th Venice Biennale, Contemporary Art Museum, Houston and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. She has created extensive public projects for Wing Luke Asian Museum, Seattle, the City of Oakland Cultural Arts and Marketing Division and the San Francisco Arts Commission. Yung directs *Our Oakland: Eastside Stories* and is the Artistic and Project Director of *Chinese Whispers*. A graduate of Stanford University, Yung has received awards from the San Francisco Foundation, the Creative Work Fund, the Center for Cultural Innovation, and the California Council on the Humanities. She is on the faculty of the Interdisciplinary Studies Department, City College of San Francisco.

JEROME REYES

FLASH MAB



Jerome Reyes,
Flash Mab, 2011

Jerome Reyes excavates the ghostly histories tied to the former Mabuhay and Mabuhay Gardens in San Francisco to explore their key roles in facilitating local cultural and political movements. The Mabuhay Gardens was a Filipino restaurant in North Beach perhaps more commonly known as a venue called the “Fab Mab”—the iconic punk rock palace. Its earlier incarnation, the Mabuhay, resided on Kearny Street in the former International Hotel. As redevelopment interests swept through the city in the late 1960’s through the 70’s threatening to forcibly displace low-income immigrant residents in the area, the Mabuhay restaurant’s small back room became a strategic locus for the community organizers from the Asian American and Third World Liberation movements in the Bay Area. When the business later relocated down the street, it shifted back and forth between the punk and activist scenes, laden with the history and significance of both communities. Reyes’ pair of drawings captures the brief moments of respite in those spaces: the haunted, empty moments between gatherings. In a short audio piece, Reyes interviews Richard Likong, an organizer and punk who moved between both communities operating out of the Mabuhay Gardens.

JEROME REYES (b. 1983 Daly City, CA United States) is a multimedia artist, researcher, and educator whose work currently deals with the potential crossroads of architecture methodologies, spectrality, and social practices. His exhibition venues include the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany, SFMOMA, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts for *Bay Area Now 5*, The Contemporary Museum Honolulu, Asian Art Museum, and was also a 2006 artist-in-residence at the M. H. deYoung Museum. Other venues include SF Camerawork and Queens Nails Projects. His work has been featured in *Art in America*, *Teme Celeste*, *Artweek*, *Art Practical/KQED*, and *SFWeekly* among others.

Reyes was a juror for the 2006 Murphy Cadogan Graduate Scholarships and has curated exhibitions for San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, ZEUM, and Galeria de La Raza. He has received awards from the San Francisco Arts Commission, Zellerbach Fund, and Walter and Elise Haas Foundation. In 2005 he received an individualized BFA in Visual Criticism and Installation/Video at the California College of the Arts.

exploration of punk music in Mexico City, Puebla, Monterrey and Queretaro, titled *Corriente Musical Punk en Mexico – 1978 a 2011 (Version No Estan Todos Los Que Son, Pero Son Todos Los Que Estan)*, moves beyond straightforward documentation through the deejay/selector’s interwoven mass of loving details, while its parenthetical title (translated as “Not All of Them Are Here, But These Are All That Are Here Version”) hints at the gaps in its catalogue.

While the artists in the show at times reveal moments and qualities of the places that shape their practice, the codes and histories they reference can be very particular to their own reading of the location. Although the two artists use very different tactics, Taha Belal and Sofia Cordova both create their own hopeful narratives against the backdrop of colonialism and the desire for creative success that hint at the freedoms and challenges of “making it” in their respective communities. Cordova performs as Chucha Santamaria, a Puerto Rican electro-dance singer looking for her breakthrough, while Belal’s Arabic advertisements imagine the ephemera of a thriving Cairo arts scene.

The artists in *On the Ground* are engaged observers and agents within their communities. While each artist has taken his or her own approach to interpreting and dissecting a locality, all of their projects emerge from an honest reflection on the terms and textures of their respective sites. By addressing the particularities of each community, they help to build a sense of differences and shared dynamics globally and locally.

BY MICHELE CARLSON

I could see the man running towards us, breaking through the barriers of the walls that lined the park. But he was at the other end still, so I wasn't quite sure if he was actually running towards us, or just running in general. I nodded slightly in his direction with my cigarette, and everyone turned to watch him closer. For some reason we were almost always the only people in the park, so we were acutely curious about anyone else who happened to wander in. Not taking my eyes off him, I dragged deeply on my Newport Light. We each held our cigarettes between index finger and thumb, the rest of our hand cupped over the cigarette, to shield it from the rain. It was always raining. The city had this built-in beat, a natural sort of rhythm. We could nod our heads or sway slightly to the patterning taps of rain that rapped against the wooden roof of our picnic shelter.

We sat for hours, days on end in the park—a million different shades of grey would pass us over. The shelters were typically four concrete posts with a wooden roof that covered a picnic table with a built-in barbeque pit. No walls. We never really used the pit for anything except as an ashtray. Sometimes we'd line up bottles that we'd polished off in the pits and throw rocks at them. The winner would have bragging rights until the next round. Other times we'd shoot guns, which most of the time just shot water, at the fires we'd try to start with fading cigarette butts. I flicked my cigarette into the pit and missed as a slight shiver moved through my body. The tall hedges nearby also rustled slightly from the breeze. It was a gentle reminder that the perimeter of the park was not surrounded by the impenetrable stone walls we often imagined, but by eight-foot tall rhododendron hedges. It is the state flower. Even in the winter, no one could see into the park, or more importantly, see out.

"Shit," Jimmy said, sitting down on the picnic bench, which made a small shriek from the weight of his 6'1"

JUAN LUNA-AVIN

CORRIENTE MUSICAL PUNK EN MEXICO – 1978 A 2011

(VERSION NO ESTAN TODOS LOS QUE SON, PERO SON TODOS LOS QUE ESTAN)

Juan Luna-Avin is a deejay-historian of Mexican punk music and visual culture. His drawings catalogue the development of the form with the kind of fervent detail that can only come from years spent digging in dusty milk crates, referencing dog-eared fanzines and seeking out shows in underground venues. As the title suggests, in Luna-Avin's *Cronologia de la Corriente Musical Punk en Mexico de 1978 a 2011/Version Cachirula (Republica Mexicana 009)*, the work maps a chronological timeline of bands from Mexico City, Puebla, Monterrey and Queretaro, listing each of the band names across its expanse. In this iteration of his ongoing process, he also embeds information about venues, images from album covers, and gig flyers, each element building his careful description of the culture and its continuing changes. The drawings' extensive breadth brings together the politically subversive, the macho, the crass and the celebratory. The show also includes a series of imagined album covers for songs that were never released as singles and a listening station featuring a playlist selection of Luna-Avin's favorites.

In addition to the works in the show, Luna-Avin will present *Mi Nueva Nacion: Sights and Sounds of Punks in Contemporary Mexico* on March 24th. Hear Luna-Avin trace the history of punk in Mexico in a presentation accompanied by music samples, video and a live set by punk band Desmadre en Krisis.



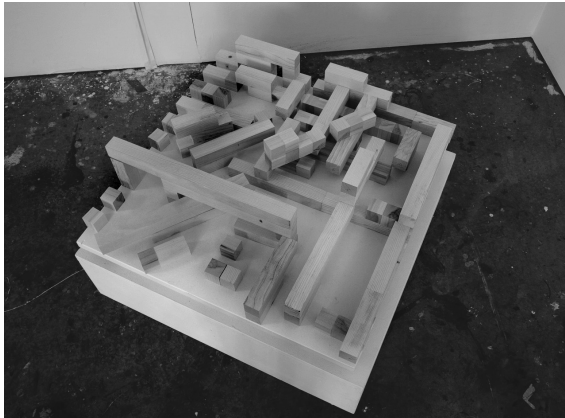
JuanLuna-Avin, *Gruexxo... ¡Es lo de hoy!*, 2009

Born in Mexico City, JUAN LUNA-AVIN is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work examines individual and collective identities through the lens of youth cultures and rock n' roll music. His current projects reflect a strong emphasis on researching the history of Latin American music, especially Mexican punk. His work has been shown at such venues as Stanford University, San Jose State University, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Queen's Nails Projects, SOMARTS Cultural Center, MOCA Los Angeles, El Museo del Barrio (NYC), Cinders Gallery (Brooklyn), and Ceroinspiracion in Quito, Ecuador.

Luna-Avin holds an MFA in Art Practice from Stanford University and a BFA in Painting from the San Francisco Art Institute, where he was an Osher Scholar. Recent awards include a Suzanne Baruch Lewis MFA Grant (2010) and a McNamara Family Creative Arts Grant from the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (2009). He is currently a Lecturer in Painting at California State University, Monterey Bay.

MALAK HELMY
STATEMENTS FROM
THE COMPOUND

Malak Helmy, *Model for the Event City*, 2010



The location that inspires Malak Helmy's work exists as both a geographic site and language itself. Her layered process captures the changing character of a place through a multi-stage translation. Helmy observed the rapid rise of touristic and high-end developments such as Marassi and Marina along the North Coast of Egypt and theorized that this development sparked similar types of construction in the suburbs surrounding Cairo. She asserts that this proliferation of unrooted and place-less architecture is first being tested along the coastal regions before the models find use elsewhere. After writing about this phenomenon, she created a series of poetic statements reflecting on the sites and fed them into a computer program that in turn helped to generate an architectural model. The project aims not to capture any iconographic quality of the physical site, but to present the end results of the kind of dislocation and re-processing she sees as endemic to her region.

MALAK HELMY is an artist working between Cairo, Doha and San Francisco. Her research surrounds the relationships between constructions of language and place. Through video, writing and collective ephemeral projects, she investigates modes of building, movement and organization of social and urban structures through logics of bilinguality, diglossia and translation. In 2008, Helmy co-founded the collective Pericentre Projects, which produced *Kharita*, an ongoing research based initiative on urban trajectories in Cairo, and the seminar *On Excess*. Helmy has been a contributor to *Bidoun* magazine and her writing has appeared in the in the book *Afterwords: Texts on Voice*. She has recently participated in *The Clifford Irving Show* curated by Raimundas Malusauskas, *SCI3*—an exhibition curated by the Post Brothers and Chris Fitzpatrick at the SFADM in San Francisco and *Southern Exposure* in San Francisco. She received her MFA in Social Practice from the California College of the Arts in 2010 and her BA from the American University in Cairo in 2005. Helmy is currently working in Adult Education and Public Programs at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha.

frame. "That's Roman's dad," clearly trying not to look in the man's direction. Roman's dad never stopped running, but it felt like his eyes shot each one of us. I flinched. Roman wasn't there, so he hurried past the picnic table where we loitered, rushing by so closely I could feel a slight burst of heat from his overrun body. I lazily put a bottle of Mad Dog 20/20 to my cheeks, trying to coolly quell the anxious warmth that had crept up when his dad forced my gaze. "Roman was supposed to go to court today, but ducked out the window of his room before his parents could get him in the car," said Greg. "They're looking for him." The dad was gone behind the wall of hedges and I gazed emptily at the spot he had last been. "What'd he do?" breathed Annie at no one in particular. You could barely hear her, no one ever heard her. "I dunno, just some stupid shit, or something," as his voice trailed off into his cigarette drag.

Like every day, we shared bottles of Mad Dog and smoked cigarettes, pack after pack. The remains of our yesterday were still visible on the park grounds. Later, Roman pushed through the hedges at the far end of the park. When he reached us, he stretched out lazily on the ground. "Yo man, your pops was up in here," one of the guys tossed out. Roman leaned with his back against the table and us. We all sat and watched the same empty park. "Whatever, I ain't goin' back there," he grunted as he shrugged it off. "Fuck it." I guess his dad never caught him. But you could tell he was nervous by the way he would take off his black, teamless baseball cap turning the bill to the back. Then take it off again and turn the bill front. Front. Back. Front. Finally pulling it low again, over his eyes.

I tell you it's a cold world, stay in school
You tell me it's a man's world, play the rules
And fade fools, 'n break rules until we major

The tape deck was the main sound most days. It always sat in the center of the table even though one of the speakers was duct-taped together and three of the buttons were missing—you had to shove a pencil into the rewind space at just the right angle, eraser side down, to get the tape to move. Most of the time we just fast-forwarded all the way back around. It felt like one of us was making a daily attempt to bring it back to life, trying →

MICHELE CARLSON is a practicing artist, writer, and educator whose interdisciplinary research investigates the intersections of history and memory, loss, race, and popular culture. She lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area where she completed an MFA in Printmaking and an MA in Visual & Critical Studies from the California College of the Arts.

Carlson's visual work has been exhibited nationally at venues, including Patricia Sweetow Gallery, the San Francisco Arts Commission, Intersection for the Arts in San Francisco and the Korean Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Recently, her writing has been published in *Art in America*, *Art Practical*, and numerous exhibition catalog essays. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses related to Asian American Studies, Visual and Critical Studies, Art History, and Visual Arts at the University of California—Davis, California College of the Arts, and several other Bay Area colleges.

this different utility tape, or that new type of battery, all of which were usually lifted from the local hardware store. We were determined to keep it alive. The tape deck was a specter of changes to come, which at that time, we had no idea were inevitable. Sometimes I think that pathetic piece of electronics kept us together. We were sure the voices coming out of the crackling speakers were talking specifically to us.

*Ain't no place I'd rather be
Full of dead homies and family
Sky high, iced out paradise
In the sky...*

We sat for hours, chain-smoking and staring into the spaces between each other at nothing specific, except the park and the beats. We mythologized our lives in order to make them real, through these surrogate voices heard over the groans of overworked speakers or the synthetic foam coverings of cheap Sony headphones.

None of us could drive yet so I spent a lot of time on the city buses. I lived a 45-minute bus ride away from the park, and on the ride I would listen to the same songs on repeat on my Walkman. Play. Rewind. Play. Repeat. I would use that time to rehearse my part in the banter that I could always predict in the upcoming day. I always crossed my fingers that day would be the day I could curse with the same intonation as the boys. We came from all over the city. Jimmy was Mien. He was the oldest of six siblings who all lived in a two-bedroom apartment, and he took three buses to get here. Annie was Vietnamese. Her mom used to hit her with electrical cords and frying pans, but she would hide them under the couch when the police came. We'd go a while without seeing Annie because she was in and out of halfway houses. Her family worked at Jansport sewing backpacks. The seams sometimes just wouldn't line up so we'd get all the reject backpacks that weren't fit for retail. When she would eventually and inevitably go home, she'd bring the reject bags to the park for us to fight over, along with the other baggage Annie got whenever she went back home. Dan was Korean; he moved here when he was 13. No matter how hard he tried, he never would lose that accent. He emulated the inflection of gangster rap as a



Sergio De La Torre,
Nuevo Drago City,
2008, film still

SERGIO DE LA TORRE
NUEVO DRAGON CITY

In a mysterious but foreboding sequence, Sergio De La Torre's *Nuevo Dragon City* depicts six Chinese-Mexican youth slowly barricading themselves in an empty Tijuana storefront. Piles of carefully arranged furniture slowly obscure the outside world beyond the glass windows until they are sealed off in near darkness. Through the performative act of removing themselves from society, these actors hint at the historic marginalization and underground survival of Chinese people in Mexico, despite their many generations long, largely invisible existence in the country.

The project began when De La Torre noticed brief traces of a local Chinese community—the occasional sign, markers of business—but realized that the people themselves were unseen. Perhaps even more strikingly, little was known about them outside of rumors of underground tunnels or secret goings-on behind barricaded storefronts. His research eventually revealed the history of a people facing a perhaps familiar refrain: immigrant labor rejected once it became less immediately useful, suddenly subject to physical and legislative violence, and forced to remain hidden to hold on. Through this suggested re-enactment, De La Torre grapples with a localized mystery—the narrative of the postmodern city and its secret—and its global implications for immigration and civil rights policies.

SERGIO DE LA TORRE is a Bay Area artist and educator. His work documents the manifold ways by which citizens reinvent themselves in the city they inhabit, as well as site-specific strategies they deploy to move 'in and out modernity'. The works often invoke collaborations with the subjects and invites both intimate and critical reflections on topics related to housing, immigration and labor, to mention only a few. De La Torre works with individuals from marginalized sectors of the cities he works in, including factory workers (Tijuana), shoeshine boys (Mexico City), undocumented immigrants (Los Angeles and San Francisco), and evicted families (Oakland). In his work he tries to approach the lives of these individuals, not as victim-subjects, but rather to reexamine the meaning of their actions in the context of shifting global conditions. De La Torre's work has appeared in the 10th International Istanbul Biennial, Turkey; the Bienal Barro de America, Museo de Bellas Artes Caracas, Venezuela; in the Cleveland Performance Art Festival, Cleveland, Ohio; the Atelier Frankfurt, Germany; the Centro Cultural Tijuana; the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco; the TRIBECA Film Festival, New York; and el Festival Internacional de Cine de Morelia. Sergio De La Torre is an Assistant Professor at the University of San Francisco Art + Architecture Department.



Sofia Cordova, *Sofia as Chucha as Carmen Miranda*, 2010

Born in 1985 in Carolina, Puerto Rico, SOFIA CORDOVA received her BFA from St. John's University in Queens, NY in 2006, and her MFA from the California College of the Arts in San Francisco in 2010. She also completed a one-year certificate program at the International Center for Photography in New York in 2006. Currently, Cordova teaches at the California College of the Arts. Her work has been exhibited in California and New York.

SOFIA CORDOVA

BABY, REMEMBER MY NAME

Through her performative alter-ego, Chucha Santamaria, Sofia Cordova builds a world of adolescent and diasporic longing as inscribed in electro-dance beats and mournful vocals. As an aspiring musical star, Chucha embodies Cordova's fantasy of success through pop culture ascendancy but also hints at the complications of Puerto Rican and Caribbean expat identity and the history of colonialism in the region. A loose, multigenerational thread runs through her songs, with brief references to wooden vessels, ships, labor and hints of violence. These themes are picked up in her paintings, which mimic old family photographs and come into focus in the present day with portraits of Chucha Santamaria and her occasional nods to past performers like Carmen Miranda. While Cordova's musical lyrics deal with the arc of regional and familial histories, her alter ego, Chucha Santamaria revels in the liberating possibilities of club music: the pure physicality of seductive dance beats and the dance hall as a refuge for marginalized youth.

Come to *Under the Influence of Love* to see Chucha Santamaria y Usted live on April 9th as they perform songs from their debut album. Let her transport you to a dance floor where mainland-tinged dreams of success come to life in the pulsing rhythms of her music. The performance also serves as the release party for Chucha Santamaria y Usted's debut LP.

way to shed his immigrant status—being a faker in one world was safer than not being from here.

Eddie slid onto the bench behind me. His hand slowly but firmly cupped my neck. Turning my head around to his, he kissed me. It was a teenage kiss, too much tongue, too much “trying to kiss.” He always smelled like old cigarettes and Polo Sport cologne, a scent that still takes me back to the park. I could feel his hand pushing down towards the belt line of my pants. He clumsily felt around, I could sense him getting frustrated by the folds of my oversized khakis—still perfectly cuffed and creased, despite the dampness of the wooden bench. We wore our pants big and low so that the crotch hung almost to our knees and my shirt was large enough that the short sleeves could easily be mistaken for long. Sometimes my clothes were so big I felt like I had nothing on at all. I gently pushed Eddie off of me and stared at the dark brown lipstick stain that circled the filter of my cigarette, evidence of the makeup I wore to darken myself. My mom was constantly trying to lighten my heavy hand.

I looked up at Eddie, who was watching Dan and Annie play sword fighting with some broken sticks. “She’s gonna trip on him,” Eddie whispered cautiously at them. Annie was always looking for any reason to get pissed, and most often at Dan. Later that day she would hit him over the head with that same stick, cutting him across the cheek deep enough that it would leave a scar that to this day reminds us of that park. Eddie loved me. I loved him in the way you love someone you know you’ll leave, but hope you won’t—mostly because you can’t yet visualize the world in a different way. The song groaned, slowing as if playing through molasses. “Fuckin’ batteries,” Jimmie said as he shook the tape deck. The park had no outlets. I dragged deeply on my Newport Light and put on my headphones.

I tried to find my friends, but they were blowin in the wind.

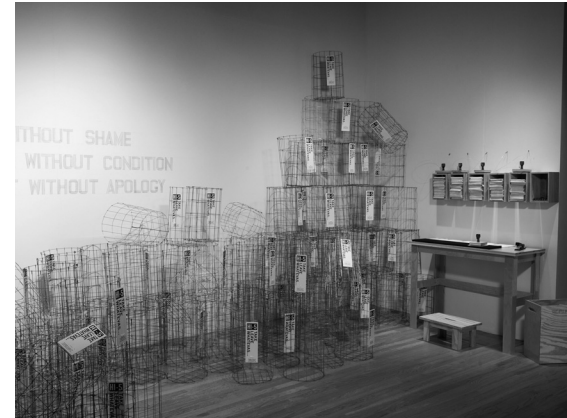
TAHA BELAL
ADVERTISEMENTS



Taha Belal, *Advertisements (019_sikkema_jenkins)*, 2011

Taha Belal's work often deliberately frustrates the smooth translation between languages. His practice highlights the power dynamics often embedded in communications, but it also revels in the spaces between language, in the gap of translation itself. For Belal, the in-between space becomes a rich and productive site in itself, where meaning can be complicated and built upon. That sense of claiming and building a new world carries through to Belal's latest project for *On the Ground*: a series of Arabic advertisements. Modeled after those found in prominent art world magazines, Belal's faux-announcements suggest a thriving and high-profile arts scene in Cairo. The pieces promote fictive exhibitions by local Egyptian artists in blue-chip galleries abroad as well as a number announcing blockbuster exhibitions by well-known American and European artists in Cairo museums and arts institutions. These works on paper imagine a Cairo arts community that has developed into a successful scene in the larger arts world, but they also speak to the limits of an arts world globalism. Does the model for success look the same everywhere? What local productions and conversations cannot be captured at this strata of the artistic community? Even as the work hints at success, it obscures the interactions and exchanges of artists in Cairo, leaving the actual building process behind the scenes.

TAHA BELAL was born in Cairo, Egypt. Brought up by an Egyptian father and American mother, he spent most of his life in Egypt until moving to the United States for college. He received his BFA from Pennsylvania State University in 2005 before moving to San Francisco where he received his MFA from the California College of the Arts. He is currently living and working in Cairo.



Gaye Chan, *Eating in Public*, 2010, installation view

GAYE CHAN
FREE GRINDZ

For the past seven years, Gaye Chan has been performing an ongoing series of interventions on public and private land in Hawai'i under the umbrella of *Eating in Public*. The project, born through the simple act of planting a fruit tree on restricted public land, currently centers around a series of unsanctioned sharing bins that Chan and her affiliates continue to distribute throughout the island as they build an informal and anti-commercial reuse network. The move toward this work grew against a backdrop of particular dialogues around territory, access and commerce on O'ahu, an island pulled at by strategic global interests of both military and economic concern. Hawai'i is the most densely militarized state in the US, in large part due to its key geographic location—a position that also underpins much of the land's historical and contemporary fascination to colonialists, foreign and domestic investors, developers, and tourists. But in spite of the confluence of outside claims to the land, *EIP*'s primary concern is building the kind of local community it envisions with a manifesto-like intensity.

Chan readily acknowledges the deep history of generosity and sharing projects within artistic practice; the project's significance comes directly from its location, and the vacuum that Chan sees in Hawai'i. Her work is an anarchistic challenge; it remains highly critical of the institutions with a hold on the land while planting the seeds for a healthy and sustainable network of exchanges amongst Hawai'i's people.

GAYE CHAN is an artist recognized equally for her individual and collaborative work. Her work has taken place on the web, in publications and in galleries. She has had solo exhibitions at Honolulu Academy of Art (Honolulu), Art in General (New York City), Artspeak (Vancouver), Gallery 4A (Sydney), SF Camerawork (San Francisco), YYY (Toronto) and The Contemporary Museum (Honolulu). Chan was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to the United States in 1969. She received her MFA from San Francisco Art Institute and is currently a professor and the Chair of the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Hawai'i.