

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

rhythm and (p)leisure, 2014/2019, 36:33 running time

8-channel video installation: HD projectors, CRT monitors, media players, stereo sounds, wooden crates, wooden pallets, discarded clothes, performance

As do many in the United States, Francis Almendárez comes from a family of immigrant farm workers; his parents hail from Honduras and his grandparents are from El Salvador. In 2014, he traveled to Honduras to better connect with his origins and his family's paths of migration. Upon his return, he realized the photographs and video he captured in Honduras primarily featured people working.

For *rhythm and (p)leisure*, he returned to and shot video and sound in northern and southern Honduras as well as in the mountains of El Salvador. For the project, he juxtaposes video portraits of people performing tasks of labor like farming, preparing tortillas, cleaning house, and constructing "Nike" soccer cleats with cultural productions like street dancing, singing, and playing music. He takes the visitor on a visual and aural tour of working-class labor at increasing speeds from the slower pace of the countryside to the hurried pace of a restaurant in the city.

With this presentation, Almendárez blurs the lines between work and leisure. Music and dance are usually considered to be entertainment but the creation, preservation, performance, and transmission of these cultural traditions is work itself. He sheds light on and elevates the value of both material and immaterial labor, and challenges the prevailing negative depictions of migrant, working-class, and queer people of color.

The piles of clothes atop the wooden pallets have each experienced their own global circulation from their various international origins, shipped to vendors, worn, and disposed. Their placement at the center of the gallery welcomes the viewer and offers up a place to sit or recline, but only for this brief moment in their existence before they are deinstalled to continue on their individual journeys. The circulation of both the pallets and clothes mirrors the circulation of people offering up their physical labor, and by extension, the circulation of culture and how it's consumed, appropriated, repackaged, and resold.

This exhibition was made possible through the generous support of Artpace San Antonio and Artadia: The Fund for Art and Dialogue.

THANK YOU

I am extremely grateful to all the participants, performers, collaborators, and assistants involved in this project, without whom this work would not be possible.

Participants and Performers

The Posada family of Cantón San Cristóbal, Ciudad Barrios, San Miguel, El Salvador

The Cantillano family of Barrio Sunseri, San Pedro Sula, Honduras

Luis Reyes and the Reyes-Amador family of San Agustín, Namasigue, Choluteca, Honduras

The Rivera-Reyes family of Chinandega, Nicaragua

The tortilla makers from Mercado Guamilito, San Pedro Sula, Honduras

The street vendors along the highways of Honduras and El Salvador

The Garifuna musicians at Chuletas y Asados Elvis, San Pedro Sula, Honduras

Ty'esha Lewis, Andrés Renteria and Jacqueline Posada

Collaborators and Assistants

Anthony Almendárez, Rosa King, Jacqueline Posada, Francis Almendárez Sr., Omar Reyes, and Pablo Marimba

Special thanks to Xavier Gilmore, Anthony Rundblade, Zaneta Taylor, Ashley Mireles, Olivia Hinojosa, Chris Castillo, and Leticia Rocha-Zivadivovic for your patience, support, and guidance in bringing my vision(s) into actuality. I truly appreciate your openness and trust throughout this entire process.

Thank you to Amber Jonas, Javier Gonzalez, Kat Cadena, Pam De La Mora, Bárbara Miñarro, Ana Fernandez, Asia Steeghs, Venus Prado, Ashley Mireles, Zaneta Taylor, Ethel Shipton, and Nate Cassie for all your clothes donations in residence with me for the time being before continuing on their individual paths of circulation. Thank you, Juana Córdova for cooking with me, joining me on my pallet hunts around San Antonio, and for being so open to talk with me about life and art. It's been a wonderful time getting to know you and learning from you. Thank you, Isabelle for the lovely conversations about family and for being so bold and unapologetic with your work. You're an inspiration and I feel very lucky to have crossed paths with you. Thank you Karina Aguilera Skvirsky and Riley Robinson for the informal studio visit on my "magic carpet" and for taking the risk and believing in me wholeheartedly from day one. I feel so honored and humbled for my time at Artpace and San Antonio and am truly grateful to Erin Murphy, Ray Ybarra, Scott Williams, Chris Breakell, Charlie Kitchen, Lisa Halff, and the whole staff and team of interns for always making me feel welcomed and at home during my time here.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Since 1995, Artpace has welcomed more than 230 artists through its renowned International Artist-in-Residence program. Annually, Artpace hosts three residencies, which each feature one Texas-based artist, one national artist, and one international artist, who are selected by a notable guest curator. Each eight-week residency culminates in a two-month exhibition on site. The mission of this program is to provide artists with unparalleled resources that allow them to experiment with new ideas and take provocative risks.

Artpace San Antonio is a nonprofit residency program which supports regional, national, and international artists in the creation of new art.

As a catalyst for artistic expression, we engage local communities with global art practices and experiences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Support for the International Artist-in-Residence Program comes from Artpace members & donors and:

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ABOUT ARTPACE

INTERNATIONAL

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

rhythm and (p)leisure
Francis Almendárez

Summer 2019 International Artist-in-Residence

In residence May 28–July 22, 2019

Exhibitions on view July 18–September 8, 2019

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Francis Almendárez was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA and is currently living and working in Houston, TX. He has participated in exhibitions and screenings in the United States and abroad including the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts; Houston Center for Photography; Pi Artworks, London; CCI Fabrika, Moscow; GALERIE DIX9, Paris; and Westwerk, Hamburg. He is the recipient of a Houston Artadia Award, the Carol Crow Memorial Fellowship, and a participant of the ICA Moscow Summer School.

Writing on his work has been featured in publications including D Magazine, spot Magazine, Artforum, ARTNEWS, and Glasstire among others. He has been a Visiting Artist at the University of Houston and teaches photography and art at Houston Community College, Houston Center for Photography, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

Almendárez received an MFA in Fine Art (with Distinction) from Goldsmiths, University of London and a BFA in Sculpture/New Genres from Otis College of Art and Design.

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