INTERNATIONAL ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Carlos Rosales-Silva

Espacio Doméstico

Spring 2018 International Artist-in-Residence
In residence January 17 > March 26, 2018
On view March 22 > May 13, 2018

Carlos Rosales-Silva was born in El Paso, Texas and has lived throughout Texas. He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin but considers oral histories from Mexican and Indigenous peoples, post-colonial historical texts, and spaces that are safe and inclusive for people of color the foundation and central cosmology of his work. His most recent output reclaims the colors and forms that have long been (ab)used to create oppressive stereotypes of Mexican and Indigenous peoples. Draining direct references, symbols, and figures allow him to study the color and form of his identity while withholding easily exploitable imagery. Rosales-Silva's central intellectual and artistic project is de-centering his white, hetero, Euro-centric western education. He has exhibited throughout Texas, and in Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City, and Brooklyn and was most recently an artist in residence at Pioneer Works in Brooklyn, NY.

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Rafa Esparza *Los Angeles, CA*
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Carlos Rosales-Silva *Austin, TX*

Risa Puleo
Curator

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ABOUT

THE EXHIBITION

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXHIBITION:
Over the last six years, I have been studying the symbolism of color. I study painted storefronts in Mexicano and Latinx neighborhoods, community murals, and the painted interiors of Mexican-American homes and businesses and the objects inside. Through these physical and ephemeral gestures, we create our own universes to inhabit—spaces that are necessary for survival.

Assimilation into American culture is perilous, conditional, and not available to all Mexicanos living in the United States. Some Mexicanos can pass for white while others are phenotypically marked. As we assimilate into mainstream American culture, Mexicanos often replicate the structural oppression of other groups. I am most interested in a concept of identity that is complex, one that is almost impossible to contain within the parameters of language. In an attempt to communicate this concept, my work drains all direct representation and displays only colors and form—an abstraction of the visual signifiers, landscapes, labor, and colors I grew up with.

I believe color itself is symbolic. The use of color in this country is part of a hierarchy of taste—one that can decide whether certain combinations of colors are tacky or gauche. Color can be weaponized against racial and cultural groups to devalue relevance and ultimately existence. Conversely one can consider the concepts of purity and neutrality assigned to something as benign as the color white. I consider my use of color an attempt to destabilize a rigid hierarchy of taste by working with color combinations that have been racialized or exoticized and devalued.

The main murals in the space illustrate the violence of modernism and the perilous trek of aspirational capitalism (El Capitalismo Aspiracional) (note: the yellow mural with the steps), and the fraught space between borders (Nosotros no cruzemos la frontera, la frontera nos cruzo) (note: the pink and red mural).

In addition to my works, I have invited two other artists to share the space with me that have cultural and geographic ties. Flor Ameira and her family are from Chihuahua, Mexico, where my family is also from. She lived in El Paso where I also spent much of my life. Eric was born and raised in El Paso where I was raised. Both Eric and Flor are of Mexican descent and we are interested in similar concepts of identity, but approach our work from uniquely different angles.

Ultimately I created this space to feel like a home, which to me is not a physical structure, but a feeling of familiarity filled with complex emotion.

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