

Francis Almendárez

rhythm and (p)leisure

August 22 – November 15, 2020



GALVESTON ARTS CENTER

Brown Foundation Gallery
August 22 – November 15, 2020

Francis Almendárez ***rhythm and (p)leisure***

Francis Almendárez' exhibition, *rhythm and (p)leisure*, is part of his ongoing investigation into the fruit and labor of working-class people, specifically of Central American and Caribbean diasporas. Almendárez' work attempts to confront and unpack the legacy and histories of exploitation, precarity, unemployment, homelessness, dislocation, and debt specific to these diasporas. Drawing on his unique personal history as the descendant of intergenerational migrant agricultural workers, Almendárez inverts and reclaims established dialogues and negative depictions of these communities. The work brings both physical labor and cultural production into the foreground, blurring the line between work and play/leisure.

Francis Almendárez is an interdisciplinary artist, filmmaker, and educator that traverses the intersections of history, (auto)ethnography, and the arts. Using them as tools to address memory and trauma, he attempts to unpack and reconstruct identity, specifically of im/migrant, queer, working-class bodies of Central America, the Caribbean, and their diasporas. Almendárez has participated in exhibitions, screenings, and performances in the US and abroad. Recent shows including *rhythm and (p)leisure*, Artpace, San Antonio, TX; *The Potential Wanderer*, The Reading Room, Dallas, TX; *Sisyphus, Ver.20.18*, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan; and *Voices of Our Mothers: Transcending Time and Distance*, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX. He is the recipient of a Houston Artadia Award, and the Carol Crow Memorial Fellowship from Houston Center for Photography. He has also been a participant of the Artpace International Artist-in-Residence program, and the Institute of Contemporary Art Moscow Summer School. Writing on his work has been featured in publications including D Magazine, spot Magazine, Artforum, ARTNEWS, Glasstire, Y.ES Contemporary, and The Dallas Morning News among others. Almendárez was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA and is currently living and working in Houston, TX where he is a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Houston School of Art. He received his MFA in Fine Art (with Distinction) from Goldsmiths, University of London and BFA in Sculpture/New Genres from Otis College of Art and Design.

francisalmendarez.com

Francis Almendárez
rhythm and (p)leisure

Checklist



rhythm and (p)leisure, 2014/2019

8-Channel video installation: HD projectors, CRT monitors, media players, stereo sound, wooden pallets, wooden crates, discarded clothes, portable work lights; installation dimensions variable. Sound Design and Editing by Anthony Almendárez.

36:33 TRT

Artist Acknowledgements

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

Thank you Maceo Spice and Import Company for donating wooden shipping pallets and to Denise Alexander, Elaine Bradford, Reyna Collura, Joshua Ojeda, Rachelle Vasquez, and others who donated clothing for the installation at Galveston Arts Center.

rhythm and (p)leisure (2016-19)

by Francis Almendárez

In my ongoing investigation into the fruit and labor of working class people, specifically of Central American and Caribbean diasporas, *rhythm and (p)leisure* is an attempt to confront and unpack the legacy and histories of exploitation, precarity, unemployment, homelessness, dislocation, and debt specific to these diasporas. The modern labor market has been and continues to be designated by gender, class, and race; perpetuating the status quo of authority, masculinity, and uneven distribution of wealth, power, and resources. From the unique position of an intergenerational migrant (from a family of agricultural workers), I seek to invert established discourse by re-claiming and charging our subjugation as a site for agency, autonomy, and potentiality. The aim is to shed light on and elevate the value of our im/material labor, and challenge the dominant and negative depictions of migrant, working-class, and queer people of color.

Taking into account both physical labor and cultural production, the video installation brings the two to the foreground simultaneously blurring the line between work and play/leisure. What is generally considered play such as music and dance, is actually work, as they are living forms of history that have stood the test of time and the violence of colonialism. The production, preservation, maintenance, performance, and passing on of these cultural traditions and forms – is work itself.

My previous work experience in retail/supermarket, office, and assembly line environments, have all influenced my interest and observation of the human body in movement during labor and in relation to space/land and other bodies. Bodies of various ages and body types, and in particular womxn of color, as a way of bringing into consideration the human body as it ages and becomes "obsolescent" within the capitalist structure we exist in. Are we complicit with our bodies and our labor within this framework? Is it out of pure necessity for survival or have we been programmed to be "productive" or both? How do we define being *productive* and how does its meaning change depending on whose body is performing what? How do we re-claim ownership of our own bodies?

Through a series of video portraits of several individuals performing various tasks of labor (that simultaneously reflect my own labor as an artist), the installation serves as an homage to not only those depicted in the videos but workers all around the world. The collective portraits avail us to snippets of workers' routines: giving us insight into cultural traditions, how things were once made, manual labor, and the rhythms of daily life.

Wooden pallets and piles of clothes that have each experienced their own global circulation, in this configuration at the center of the gallery, welcome the viewer and offer up a place to repose. But only for this fragment of time in their life before getting deinstalled and continuing on their individual journeys. The handmade crates function in a similar way except they are only just beginning their journey as this multipurpose object (as portable shelter for the monitors and as pedestal) that will hopefully begin getting marked wherever/whenever they get shipped.

This circulation of pallets and clothes – essentially commerce – interests me in the way it mirrors the circulation of people/communities offering up their bodies/labor, and by extension, the circulation of culture(s) and how it's consumed, appropriated, repackaged and resold.

While rich with culture and traditions, and a vast wealth of knowledge, abilities, and experiences, these communities find themselves at a precarious moment in the midst of unstable economies, environmental negligence, drug-trafficking related violence, a polarized socio-political climate, etc., and therefore at risk. Those that own land or property are more capable of self-sustaining while those who have experienced the loss of land/property or have a history of displacement are far more disadvantaged and typically work their way to the cities in search for opportunities. Younger generations struggle with this directly as they are expected to contribute to society yet have limited access to education, and are increasingly becoming disinterested in learning and maintaining cultural traditions having been exposed to the leisurely lifestyles of excess in the West. At the same time, older adults in their thirties and forties are considered too old and too slow, resulting in them becoming replaced and/or overlooked in the job market when in search for employment.

As a result, many of them work their way north to major cities in North America, primarily the US, to offer the very same types of labor depicted in these videos, but without the same pride, dignity, and autonomy they held back in their homes. Rather than working directly for their families and/or communities, these same types of labor are instead in service to a dominant majority made up of various intersecting levels of privilege (including but not limited to gender, class, race, sexual orientation, religion, citizenship, education, age, physique, and ability). The intense and physically demanding labor that they provide is labor that average citizens reject and typically look down on for its harsh conditions, stressful environments, precarity, and poverty-level wages. Even more disturbing and hypocritical is that often times the same people who vilify immigrant laborers, completely lack the ability, endurance, and capacity to fill those roles and/or have already benefited from this discriminative and exploitative system in place whether in the West or in their respective home countries (and sometimes both).

Despite this rat race conundrum, these videos show different ways in which these communities navigate these circumstances and come up with creative (and sometimes clandestine) ways of working in order to make ends meet such as making counterfeit Nike cleats or taking pleasure in exerting one's culture in an informal public space. In the latter half of the video installation, you get a snapshot of a vibrant nightlife led by Garifuna musicians right in front of the entrance to a restaurant. This informal congregation and reclamation of public space draws more people than the club-like environment inside the actual building. Therefore, both the establishment and the group of Garifuna musicians mutually operate in creating this "Black and Brown space" for dance, celebration, and pleasure (even if just temporarily) simultaneously enabling and nurturing the practice, overlapping, and cross-pollination of cultures.

Unlike other forms of dance where you dance to existing/live music, in punta, the dancer takes on the role of conductor, oftentimes speeding up the tempo and dictating when pelvic thrusts align with and are emphasized through drum flams. Naturally, as the celebration progresses, the musicians and dancers are encircled by a growing and cheerful crowd where only up to two dancers are allowed at a time. A reversal of roles also occurs in this mimetic cock-and-hen mating dance whereby the womxn often take the lead and the men need to receive approval in order to dance with them. The womxn - specifically Black womxn - emboldened through this dance, take ownership of and embrace their bodies and their sexuality, simultaneously setting a radical and empowering example of autonomy, endurance, and pleasure to other womxn.

Having been formed through the integration of their Arawakan, Carib, and Maroon (of West and Central Africa) ancestors on the island of St. Vincent, the Garinagu people maintain a rich culture and language that reflects their complex history of displacement. As one of the few extant languages remaining from the Arawakan language family, the Garifuna language is an atypical one being primarily spoken outside the Arawakan language area of northern South America, but also having been largely influenced by Carib languages, followed by French, English and Spanish, and to a lesser degree African languages. The (dis)placement of Maroon people from Africa to St. Vincent (and the Caribbean at large) intersected with Arawakan and Carib migrations at the time. Later on, as the Garinagu people, they were exiled/deported by the British from St. Vincent to the island of Roatán from where over time they migrated to mainland Honduras, Guatemala, Belize and Nicaragua.

Today, they form part of the Central American exodus resulting from the region's violent destabilization caused by continued American imperialism and economic policies of extraction. It is at this juncture where their history of migration overlaps with mine which I am still continuing to research and discover. While I don't know what indigenous peoples my ancestors came from (as so many of us forming the diasporas of this region also don't know), it is this

piecing together of parallel histories that comforts me and could potentially even get us closer to discovering our past, in order to better understand our present, and spearhead our own futures.

In many ways, these individuals and communities (I have had the honor and privilege of spending time with), echo amongst each other a reclamation of culture and identity, and this insistence is their resistance. On the one hand preserving their histories, traditions, and collective memories, and on the other hand, disrupting the status quo, subverting and inverting the flow of capital, and most importantly reminding us of the power and potential in decolonial imaginary and reconciliation. The intersecting of these trajectories in time and space emphasizes the importance of recording our own histories and of continuing to preserve our cultures, but with an openness and solidarity against racism/anti-Blackness, sexism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, etc. We clearly have a lot of work to do but let us use the Garinagu people who embody a stoicism and camaraderie exemplified through their music, dance, and willingness to share, as an example of how and where we can start.

ritmo y (g)ocio (2016-19)

por Francis Almendárez

En mi investigación en curso sobre los frutos y el trabajo de las personas de clase obrera, específicamente de las diásporas de América Central y el Caribe, *ritmo y (g)ocio* es un intento de enfrentar y discernir el legado y las historias de explotación, precariedad, desempleo, falta de vivienda, desplazamiento y deuda específicas de estas diásporas. El mercado laboral moderno ha sido y sigue siendo determinado por género, clase y raza; esto perpetúa el status quo de la autoridad, la masculinidad y la distribución desigual de la riqueza, el poder y los recursos. Desde la posición única de un migrante intergeneracional (de una familia de trabajadores agrícolas), busco invertir el discurso establecido al reclamar y apoderarnos de nuestra subyugación como un sitio donde se tiene agencia, autonomía y potencialidad. El objetivo es iluminar y elevar el valor de nuestro labor in/material, y desafiar las representaciones dominantes y negativas de las personas de color migrantes, de clase obrera y queer.

Tomando en cuenta tanto el trabajo físico como la producción cultural, esta instalación de video los pone a ambos en primer plano, difuminando al mismo tiempo la línea entre el trabajo y el placer/gozo/ocio. Aunque generalmente se consideran entretenimiento, la música y la danza son en realidad trabajo, ya que son formas vivientes de la historia que permanece a pesar del paso del tiempo y la violencia del colonialismo. La producción, preservación, mantenimiento, ejercicio y transmisión de estas tradiciones y formas culturales es un trabajo en sí mismo.

Mi experiencia laboral previa en entornos de tiendas, supermercados, oficinas y líneas de ensamblaje ha influido en mi interés y observación del cuerpo humano en movimiento durante el trabajo y en relación con el espacio/tierra y otros cuerpos; cuerpos de diversas edades y formas, especialmente aquellos de las mujeres de color, como manera de considerar el cuerpo humano a medida que envejece y se vuelve “obsolescente” dentro de la estructura capitalista en la que existimos. ¿Somos cómplices, con nuestros cuerpos y nuestro trabajo, dentro de este marco? ¿Es por pura necesidad de sobrevivir o hemos sido programados para ser “productivos”, o ambos? ¿Cómo definimos ser productivos y cómo cambia ese significado según el cuerpo de quién realiza qué? ¿Cómo podemos recuperar la posesión de nuestros propios cuerpos?

A través de una serie de retratos en video de varias personas que realizan varias obras de trabajo (que a la vez reflejan mi propio trabajo como artista), la instalación sirve como un homenaje no solo a los que se muestran en los videos sino a los trabajadores de todo el mundo. Los retratos colectivos nos otorgan fragmentos de las rutinas de los trabajadores: nos permiten conocer las tradiciones culturales, cómo se hacían las cosas, el trabajo manual y los ritmos de la vida cotidiana.

Tarimas de madera y montones de ropa, ambos de los cuales han experimentado su propia circulación global, dan la bienvenida al espectador desde su configuración en el centro de la galería y ofrecen un lugar para descansar durante este fragmento de tiempo en sus existencias, después del cual serán desinstalados y continuarán sus viajes individuales. Las cajas hechas a mano funcionan de una manera similar, pero ellas apenas están comenzando su viaje como objetos multipropósito (funcionando como refugios portátiles para los monitores y como pedestales) que, con suerte, comenzarán a acumular marcas donde y cuando sean enviados.

Esta circulación de tarimas y ropa, esencialmente comercio, me interesa en la forma en que refleja la circulación de personas/comunidades que ofrecen sus cuerpos/trabajo, y por extensión, la circulación de la(s) cultura(s) y cómo se consume, se apropia, se reenvasa y se revende.

A pesar de su riqueza cultural y tradicional, y su vasto patrimonio de conocimientos, habilidades y experiencias, estas comunidades se encuentran en un momento precario en medio de economías inestables, negligencia ambiental, violencia relacionada con el narcotráfico, un clima sociopolítico polarizado, etc., y por lo tanto están en riesgo. Quienes poseen tierras o propiedades son más capaces de sostenerse, mientras que aquellos que han experimentado la pérdida de tierras o propiedades o tienen un historial de desplazamiento son mucho más desfavorecidos y frecuentemente se abren camino hacia las ciudades en busca de oportunidades. Las generaciones más jóvenes se enfrentan directamente a este problema, ya que se espera que contribuyan a la sociedad, pero tienen acceso limitado a la educación, y están cada vez más desinteresadas en aprender y mantener las tradiciones culturales tras haber estado expuestas a los estilos de vida occidentales de decadencia y ocio. Al mismo tiempo, los adultos entre los treinta y cincuenta años son considerados demasiado viejos y lentos, lo que hace que sean reemplazados y/o pasados por alto en el mercado laboral cuando buscan empleo.

Como resultado, muchos de ellos se dirigen hacia el norte hacia las principales ciudades de América del Norte, principalmente los Estados Unidos, para ofrecer los mismos tipos de mano de obra que se muestran en estos videos, pero sin el mismo orgullo, dignidad y autonomía que retuvieron en sus hogares. En lugar de trabajar directamente para sus familias y/o comunidades, estos mismos tipos de trabajo están al servicio de una mayoría dominante formada por varios niveles de privilegios entrelazados (incluyendo, entre otros, privilegios por género, clase, raza, orientación sexual, religión, ciudadanía, educación, edad, físico y capacidad). El trabajo intenso y físicamente exigente que proporcionan es trabajo que los ciudadanos promedio rechazan y suelen menospreciar por sus duras condiciones, entornos estresantes, precariedad y salarios de nivel de pobreza. Aún más perturbador e hipócrita es que muchas veces las mismas personas que maltratan a los obreros inmigrantes carecen por completo de la habilidad, el aguante y la

capacidad para desempeñar esos roles y/o ya se han beneficiado de este sistema discriminatorio y explotador, ya sea en Occidente o en sus respectivos países de origen (y a veces en ambos).

A pesar del problema de la competencia hostil causada por este sistema económico, estos videos muestran diferentes formas en que estas comunidades navegan estas circunstancias e idean formas creativas (y a veces clandestinas) de trabajar para poder subsistir, como manufacturar tenis piratas de Nike o disfrutar ejerciendo su cultura en un espacio público informal. En la segunda mitad de la instalación de video, obtenemos un vistazo de una vibrante vida nocturna dirigida por músicos garífuna frente a la entrada de un restaurante. Esta congregación informal y la recuperación del espacio público atraen a más personas que el ambiente de discoteca dentro del edificio. Por lo tanto, tanto el establecimiento como el grupo de músicos garífuna operan mutuamente para crear este "espacio Negrx y Morenx" para la danza, la celebración y el placer (aunque solo sea temporalmente), lo que permite y nutre simultáneamente la práctica, la superposición y el cruce de culturas.

A diferencia de otras formas de baile en las que se baila al ritmo de música existente/en vivo, en punta el bailarín asume el rol de director de orquesta, pudiendo acelerar el ritmo y dictar cuándo los movimientos de las caderas se alinean y se enfatizan a través del flam del tambor. Naturalmente, a medida que avanza la celebración, los músicos y bailarines se ven rodeados por una multitud cada vez más grande y alegre. Solo se permiten hasta dos bailarines a la vez. También se produce una inversión de roles en esta danza de apareamiento entre macho y hembra, en el cual la mujer a menudo toma la iniciativa y los hombres necesitan recibir permiso para bailar con ellas. Las mujeres, específicamente las mujeres Negras, animadas a través de esta danza, toman posesión y hacen suyos sus cuerpos y su sexualidad, estableciendo simultáneamente un ejemplo radical y poderoso de autonomía, resistencia y placer para otras mujeres.

Tras haberse formado a través de la integración de sus ancestros arawakos, caribes y cimarrones (de África occidental y central) en la isla de San Vicente, los garinagu mantienen una rica cultura e idioma que refleja su compleja historia de desplazamiento. Como uno de los pocos idiomas existentes que quedan de la familia de lenguas arawakas, la lengua garífuna es una lengua atípica, ya que se habla principalmente fuera del área de la lengua arawaka en el norte de Sudamérica, y también ha sido influenciada en gran medida por las lenguas caribes, seguida por el francés, el inglés y español, y en menor grado lenguas africanas. El desplazamiento de los cimarrones de África a San Vicente (y el Caribe en general) se cruzó con las migraciones de los arawakos y caribes en ese momento. Más tarde, como pueblo Garífuna, fueron exiliados/deportados por los británicos desde San Vicente a la isla de Roatán, desde donde emigraron a la parte continental de Honduras, Guatemala, Belice y Nicaragua.

Hoy forman parte del éxodo centroamericano como resultado de la desestabilización violenta de la región causada por el continuo imperialismo estadounidense y las políticas económicas de extracción. Es en esta coyuntura donde su historia de migración se superpone con la mía, que todavía estoy investigando y descubriendo. Aunque no sé de qué pueblos indígenas proceden mis ascendientes (como tampoco lo sabemos muchos de los que formamos las diásporas de esta región), esta combinación de historias paralelas me trae consuelo, y podría incluso acercarnos más a descubrir nuestros pasados para comprender mejor nuestros presentes e impulsar nuestros propios futuros.

En muchos sentidos, estos individuos y comunidades (con quienes he tenido el honor y el privilegio de pasar un tiempo) reflejan entre sí una recuperación de cultura e identidad, y esta insistencia es su resistencia. Por un lado, preservan sus historias, tradiciones y memorias colectivas y, por otro lado, interrumpen el status quo, subvierten e invierten el flujo de capital y lo más importante: nos recuerdan el poder y el potencial en el imaginario descolonial y la reconciliación. La intersección de estas trayectorias en el tiempo y el espacio enfatiza la importancia de registrar nuestras propias historias y de continuar preservando nuestras culturas, pero mostrándonos abiertos y solidarios contra el racismo/anti-negrura, el sexismo, el clasismo, la homofobia, la transfobia, la islamofobia, etc. Es evidente que tenemos mucho trabajo que hacer, pero utilicemos el ejemplo de las personas Garinagu, que encarnan un estoicismo y camaradería revelados a través de su música, su danza y su disposición para compartir, como referencia de cómo y dónde podemos comenzar.

Francis Almendárez

b. 1987, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Currently lives and works in Houston, TX, USA

www.francismendarez.com

Education

2014-2016 Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK

MFA Fine Art (with Distinction)

2010-2013 Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA

BFA Sculpture/New Genres; minor in Teacher Credential Preparation: Single Subject in Art

2012 École Nationale Supérieure des-Beaux Arts, Paris, France

Spring Exchange Program – Ateliers Marie-José Burki and Patrick Tosani

2008-2010 Pasadena City College, Pasadena, CA, USA

Photography and Foundation

Residencies / Summer Schools

2019 Artpace International Artist-in-Residence Program, Selected by Karina Aguilera Skvirsky, Artpace, San Antonio, Texas, USA

2015 ICA Moscow Summer School, Akademicheskaya Dacha, Vyshny Volochyok, Russia

Awards / Recognitions

2020 Houston Arts Alliance Support for Artists and Creative Individuals Grant, City of Houston Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, Houston, TX, USA

2018 Houston Artadia Award, Artadia: The Fund for Art and Dialogue, Brooklyn, NY, USA

2018 Honorable Mention – 2018 Woodstock AIR, Juried by Lisa Henry and Libby Pratt, The Center for Photography at Woodstock, Woodstock, NY, USA

2018 Carol Crow Memorial Fellowship, Juried by Charlotte Cotton, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX, USA

2015 Shortlisted – Bloomberg New Contemporaries at the ICA London, London, UK

2013 Juror's Award – BFA Thesis Exhibition, Juried by Lauri Firstenberg, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA

2012 June Yuer Memorial Scholarship, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA

2009 Altadena Rotary Club / Pasadena City College Scholarship – Photography, Altadena, CA, USA

Solo and Two-Person Exhibitions

2020 [Forthcoming] *Anthony and Francis Almendárez: Navigating the Archives Within*, Curated by Mary Magsamen, Aurora Picture Show, Houston, TX, USA

2020 [Forthcoming] *Untitled*, Curated by Dennis Nance, Galveston Arts Center, Galveston, TX, USA

2019 *rhythm and (p)leisure*, Curated by Karina Aguilera Skvirsky, Artpace, San Antonio, Texas, USA

2019 *Home away from home*, Curated by Debra Barrera, In tandem with *Latino Art Now!*, Jonathan Hopson Gallery, Houston, TX, USA (Performance)

2019 *Nuestro Hogar: Francis Almendárez and Ana Fernandez*, Curated by Debra Barrera, In tandem with *Latino Art Now!*, Jonathan Hopson Gallery, Houston, TX, USA

2019 *The Potential Wanderer*, Curated by Caroline Elbaor, The Reading Room, Dallas, TX, USA

2018 *Voices of Our Mothers: Transcending Time and Distance*, Curated by Charlotte Cotton, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX, USA

2016 *New Cross / Van Nuys*, Curated by Caroline Elbaor, NX Project Space, London, UK

Group Exhibitions

- 2021 [Forthcoming] El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY, USA
- 2019 *We Are Here, Here We Are: A Celebration of the Americas*, Curated by Carmen Champion, San Jacinto College Central Gallery, Pasadena, TX, USA
- 2019 *This is how I do this: HCC Central Faculty Art Exhibition*, Curated by Timothy Novak, Houston Community College Central Art Gallery, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019 *El Chow: Mango verde*, Curated by Moe Penders, Sabine Street Studios, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019 *El Zócalo: 72 Miles | 72 Stories*, Curated by Benito Vasquez, Alley Theater, Houston, TX, USA
- 2018 薛西弗斯 *Ver.20.18 / Sisyphus, Version 20.18*, Digiark, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan (Catalog)
- 2017 *Family Reunion*, Curated by Jessica Ziskind, Pi Artworks, London, UK
- 2016 *Le Paradis, un peu plus loin*, Curated by Théo-Mario Coppola, Galerie Dix9, Paris, France
- 2016 *Фасада Under Construction*, Str. Melnikova 3 korp. 4, Moscow, Russia
- 2016 *MFA Degree Show*, RHB, Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK
- 2016 *No Lifeguard On Duty*, Curated by Caroline Elbaor and Tony Tremlett, Westwerk, Hamburg, Germany
- 2016 *Between The Lines*, Curated by Stanislav Shuripa, GRAD, London, UK
- 2013 *We are making people's days as much as we are ruining them!*, Galef Center for Fine Arts, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA (Catalog)
- 2012 *To See, or Not To See*, Bolsky Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- 2012 *44*, Bolsky Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- 2008 *Annual Juried Exhibition*, Juried by Rita Gonzalez, Pasadena City College Art Gallery, Pasadena, CA, USA

Group Screenings

- 2020 *Satellites*, Curated by Mary Magsamen, Aurora Picture Show, www.aurorapictureshow.org
- 2020 *Society for Photographic Education Media Festival*, The Westin Galleria, Houston, TX, USA
- 2018 *Of encounters and other collective readings: Carlos Alfonso in dialogue with Théo-Mario Coppola*, Galerie Paris-Beijing, Paris, France
- 2018 *FLATS Movie Night*, Curated by Jessi Bowman, FLATS, Houston, TX, USA
- 2017 *Будеocyббoма-2 / Videosubбота-2*, Curated by Alice Kern, CCI Fabrika, Moscow, Russia
- 2016 *Festin chez Trimalçion*, Curated by Théo-Mario Coppola, Atelier La Mine, Montreuil, France
- 2014 *X-Mas Short Film Madness: Queer, Post-Porn, Experimental Video-Art*, Curated by Lola Clavo, Edificio AXA, Porto, Portugal

Group Performances

- 2019 *recalibrate*, Co-Curated with Xavier Gilmore, Artpace, San Antonio, TX, USA
- 2018 *A Night of Sound and Light*, Alabama Song, Houston, TX, USA
- 2015 *Thank you for your time.*, Maher's Basement, London, UK

Curatorial Projects

- 2019 *recalibrate*, Co-Curated with Xavier Gilmore, Artpace, San Antonio, TX, USA
- 2018 薛西弗斯 *Ver.20.18 / Sisyphus, Version 20.18*, Co-Curated with Yi-Chun Lin and Hsuan Wang, Digiark, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan (Catalog)
- 2016 *Project your desire [here]*, Co-Curated with Théo-Mario Coppola, Nexialism Center of Research and Galerie Dix9, Paris, France
- 2015 *Thank you for your time.*, Maher's Basement, London, UK
- 2014-16 *Videodrome (#1-9)*, Laurie Grove Baths, Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK

Collaborative Performances / Workshops

- 2019 *Anatomy of Our Land / Anatomía de Nuestra Tierra*, Workshop and Performance led by Awilda Rodríguez-Lora, Part of Collective Presence, Curated by Ashley DeHoyos, DiverseWorks, Houston TX, USA
- 2019 Brown Artist Retreat: Houston, Workshop led by Rafa Esparza and Risa Puleo, Part of Collective Presence, Curated by Ashley DeHoyos, DiverseWorks, Houston TX, USA
- 2016 Radical Boredwatching, Workshop led by Marcus Coates, Co-Organized with Kristien van den Brande, Dilston Grove, London, UK

Artist / Panel Talks

- 2020 *Houston Fellowship Advisor Presentations*, with Jillian Conrad, El Franco Lee II, Delilah M. Montoya, and Karen Navarro, Artadia: The Fund for Art and Dialogue, Zoom, www.zoom.us
- 2020 *All Together Session: Notas al Calce / Footnotes to the City*, Presentation and Panel Talk moderated by Ashley DeHoyos, Organized by Xandra Eden, Ashley DeHoyos, Matt Manalo, Ivette Román Roberto, and Kelly Johnson. Part of *Common Field Convening Online 2020*, www.commonfield.org | YouTube, www.YouTube.com
- 2020 *Re-photographing the Boundaries: A Double Consciousness*, Panel Talk with Delilah M. Montoya, Cristina Velásquez, and Jan Rattia, moderated by Wendy Watriss, Part of the *Society for Photographic Education (SPE) Annual Conference: 20/20 Vision*, The Westin Galleria, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019 *Studio Visit: Life and Work as an Artist*, Panel Talk with Debra Barrera, moderated by Max Fields, Part of the *FotoFest International and University of Houston Practicum: FotoFest as a Practice*, Jonathan Hopson Gallery, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019 *Summer International AIR Exhibition Opening & Talk*, with Juana Córdova and Narcissister, moderated by Karina Aguilera Skvirsky, Artpace, San Antonio, TX, USA
- 2019 *Summer 2019 Artist Welcome Dinner*, International Artists-in-Residence Presentations with Juana Córdova and Narcissister, Artpace, San Antonio, TX, USA
- 2019 *Las Fronteras: Houston Artists in Nature, with Science*, Panel Talk with Jacqueline Posada, Sarah Sudhoff and Ángel Lartigue, moderated by Henry G. Sanchez, Law Office Center for Citizenship and Art (LOCCA), Houston, TX, USA
- 2019 *Roundtable: Art and Politics*, with Rabéa Ballin and Mujeres Malas, moderated by Gabriel Martinez, Part of the *Latino Art Now! Conference: Sight Lines & Time Frames*, University of Houston, Houston, TX, USA
- 2018 *Artist Talk: Thinking Through Photography*, Photography/Digital Media Program, University of Houston, Houston, TX, USA
- 2018 *Panel Talk: Sisyphus, Ver.20.18*, with Manray Hsu and I-Hua Lee, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, Taiwan
- 2018 *2018 Carol Crow Memorial Fellowship Recipient*, with Charlotte Cotton and Ashlyn Davis, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX, USA
- 2016 *Collaboration in Film*, moderated by Marion Phillini, Wimbledon College of Art, University of the Arts London, London, UK

Critical / Creative Writing

- 2019 *Reconciliation in the Search for Home*
- 2016 *Queer Migrant Rhythms: Resistance and Becoming in the Age of Global Crises*
- 2013 *The Latino Male as "Bandit:" An Erased History, Subordination, and Subversion*

Reviews

- 2019 *Y.ES Meet the Artist: Exhibition Review of Francis Almendárez: "rhythm and p(leisure)" at Artpace, San Antonio*, Reyes Ramirez, Y.ES Contemporary Art El Salvador, www.yescontemporary.org, September 27
- 2019 *Avenues of Release: The Artpace Summer Shows*, Neil Fauerso, Glasstire {Texas Visual Art}, www.glasstire.com, September 6
- 2019 *Who are the Houston Bio-Artists?*, Henry G. Sanchez, Glasstire {Texas Visual Art}, www.glasstire.com, May 27
- 2019 *Nuestro Hogar: Francis Almendárez and Ana Fernandez at Jonathan Hopson*, Susana Monteverde, Glasstire {Texas Visual Art}, www.glasstire.com, April 15
- 2019 *Underappreciated and underpaid: This artist's autobiographical work has universal appeal*, Christopher Mosley, The Dallas Morning News, www.dallasnews.com, January 31
- 2019 *At The Reading Room, Francis Almendárez Illustrates the Migrant Experience*, Charlotte Marina Ioffe, D Magazine, www.dmagazine.com, January 24
- 2018 *主體的漂流或定向《薛西弗斯 Ver. 20.18》 / Drifting or Orientation of the Subject "Sisyphus Ver.20.18"*, Chen Yuanzhang, Taishin Bank Foundation for Arts and Culture: ARTalks, www.talks.taishinart.org.tw, July 25
- 2018 *薛西弗斯 Ver.20.18 / Sisyphus, Ver.20.18*, Lee I-Hua, Artforum, www.artforum.com, June 23
- 2018 *Spotlight: 2018 Fellowship Winners*, Charlotte Cotton, spot Magazine: A Publication of the Houston Center for Photography, Spring 2018, Print

Teaching Experience

- 2020-21 *Visiting Lecturer*, School of Art, University of Houston, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019-20 *Adjunct Professor*, Houston Community College System, Houston, TX, USA
- 2018-20 *Teaching Artist*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, USA
- 2018-19 *Teaching Artist*, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX, USA
- 2017 *Teaching Artist*, Los Angeles Music and Art School, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- 2011 *Teaching Assistant Intern*, Santa Monica High School, Santa Monica, CA, USA
- 2010-11 *Teaching Assistant*, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Related Professional Experience / Affiliation

- 2020-21 *Member*, Common Field Network, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- 2020 *Artist Advisor*, Houston Artadia Fellowship, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019-20 *Artist Advisory Board Member*, DiverseWorks, Houston, TX, USA
- 2019-20 *Member*, Society for Photographic Education, Cleveland, Ohio, USA
- 2018-19 *Education Assistant*, Houston Center for Photography, TX, USA