

Other Days

Group Exhibition

Reisig and Taylor Contemporary

2680 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

March 2 - April 6, 2024. Poetry Reading Saturday, March 16, 6:30pm - 10pm.

Saturday, March 16, 6:30pm - 10pm, Reisig and Taylor Contemporary is hosting a Poetry Reading with folks inside and outside the current group exhibition “Other Days.” From Beyond: Poet Laureate of San Francisco, Tongo Eisen-Martin and local painter-poet Paasha Motamedi. Among Us: Frantz Jean-baptiste and DJ Seth-The-Giant (Cousin Danny) will be holding-down the night, and Skinclair Vince-Cisitud will be sharing some tall tales from below the bedside of His Excellency Nayib Bukele. Other artists and articulates will also be performing. (It’s also been rumored that someone’s girlfriend will be reading somebody’s boyfriend’s play....) Notably, nobody or everybody you know will be there.

So, don your finest fatigues and brace yourself for an evening of infidelity and immortal combat!

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Epilogue:

Thank you to all the folks who came through the gallery on Saturday. With a rare (but always everywhere) meeting of people, power, and serendipity, we ended-up somewhere between a dream and a revolution. And at the end all that remained was weirdness and dancing. It was a good night. Everything moved.

Thank you to Tongo Eisen-Martin, who generously shared his (and his daughter’s) time. We are honored and grateful to have you lead-off the night with your presence and your words. (His works include *Heaven Is All Goodbyes* (City Lights Books, 2017), *someone's dead already* (Bootstrap Press, 2015), *Blood on the Fog* (City Lights Pocket Poets Series #62, 2021). He is also the current Poet Laureate of San Francisco.)

Thank you to Paasha Motamedi, Frantz Jean-baptiste and DJ Seth-The-Giant (Cousin Danny) for all of your energy in organizing and engineering the event. Thank you Conrad for keeping us moving with your sounds! (And thank you Sinclair Vicisitud for performing while keeping your hair impeccably intact!)

It was a good night. Nothing stood-still.

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The current group exhibition includes works by German artist Claudia Rega, San Francisco-based Chinese artist Xiao He, and Los Angeles-based artists Frantz Jean-baptiste, Grant Falardeau, Daniela Soberman, Rudik Ovsepyan, and Sinclair Vicisitud. The exhibition is on view from March 2 through April 6, 2024.

As an exhibition curious about the contemporary status of “expression” or “expressionisms,” it seems productive, if not necessary, to consider this topic in relation to other media alongside visual forms like painting and sculpture. In particular, the spoken—oral and aural—quality of poetry offers a different kind of encounter with the time (more so than the space) associated with a mode of expression or way of

transmitting something that does not quite align with any ready-made languages, traditions, or structures. (It is precisely at this place of saying or showing something that does not acquiesce to any already-known form—despite a work’s proximity to a present reality—where, historically and currently, expression appears to be at work.)

Two of the participating poets (who are also included in the exhibition), Frantz Jean-baptiste and Sinclair Vicisitud, directly incorporate poetry, writing, or text into their practice (if not into or alongside specific works themselves). For Jean-baptiste, his current works are titled with poems, and one of his exhibiting paintings is installed along with the lines of the poem (written on the wall in chalk) running-through the accompanying painting: “embrace the fall / he referred to me as a dog / blood dripping down the halls [...] (2023). For Vicisitud, there is often a literary reference or refrain tucked-into the subject and style of any particular piece (as with “The stupid flour of madmen” (2023). Like a study after a prior painting, there is an intimate history situated between a work that responds to another (type of) work, revealing something personal and autobiographical as well as referential and shared.

Crossing borders between parallel worlds or alternate realities, the exhibition records gaps in time and space along disorientations of slipping traits, places, marks, figures, and characters. From forgotten landscapes of past (or future) lives to séances with sleeping, shut-eyed visions from someone else’s dream, the collected works recover other worlds, and other days, that populate a timeline’s seams with blinks of an eye or rolls of the dice. Stranded somewhere along tragedy and comedy, nostalgia and melancholia, the works’ blurry movements between presences and absences track the act of “expression” in relation to the timing—the drifting and clotting—of a body as an ambiguous sequence rather than a shape or a readymade form.

But what does it mean for an artwork to be “expressive,” “expressionistic,” or for an act to be “expressively” carried-out? What does it mean for an expression, thought, feeling, or figment to be effectively communicated or conveyed? Unlike the dualistic “inner” and “outer” spatial trajectory—from inward feeling to outward realization—traditionally setup by expressionist modes of painting and sculpture, the expressive practices encountered in this exhibition operate at the border between insides and outsides, between depths and surfaces, between sleeping and waking. Without preserving any certain, stable sense of interior or exterior, the works remain undecidably at their limits, at the horizon between bodies—between night, and other days.

As both archive and premonition, the exhibition poses a fragmented response to the dominant history of expressive traditions of painting and sculpture. This implicit response instigates the relationship between the Western art historical tradition of “expression” as a spatial movement from “inside” (‘inner feeling’) to “outside” (‘outer realization’) and the power structures that regulate-and-control the ways in which bodies of art relate to and interact with actual bodies. Further, the works collectively challenge the ideologies of expressionism as a loosening of realistic forms or an introduction of sub/conscious or internal imaginaries; rather, modes of representation and regulations of realities are called into question at their roots. Against the reduction of a body and expression to inner feelings and outer forms, the exhibition observes a rapidly increasing undecidability of inside and outside when considered as points in time—moments in a moving sequence—or horizons of events, rather than definite positions in space.[1]

Simultaneously turning on distinct (art) historical motifs and ambiguous bodily imprints or autobiographical imageries, the twists and turns of the exhibition’s chronological pathway recur in the split times, absent events, and divided histories expressively dis/connected by the shifting sculptural and painterly terrain of each work. Homelands are built for strangers, childhoods become middle-aged,

calendars rewrite maps, figures form their ghosts, colors speak a creole.... Initially and ultimately, this paradoxical space of expression is tracked through movements in time and relations between parallel—intimate and close, but perpetually distanced—bodies.

Structurally, the exhibition is built with a deeper timeline, reaching back to the late 70s with an historical painting by Rudik Ovsepyan. Included alongside the other artists' current works (and one Ovsepyan's most recent works as well), the evolutionary process of expressive forms is made accessible within the progression of a single lifetime and within the individual works at the same time. Effectively, this work is a place-holder for the past, a cut or beginning to the sequence providing a (hole or) point of reference for the timeline of the exhibition. This is a way of acting-out the way which past forms are accumulating in present activities: time infects and transforms any sense of space (or place).

What a body lacks, the works recover. Or, what lacks a body, a body covers.... Piece by piece, this defamiliarized and distanced (but estrangedly intimate) scene follows frenetic torsions between memory, reality, history, and fantasy. With each of these torsions, the space of a painting or sculpture results from a twist in a body's (the artwork, the visitor, or the artist's) place-in-time.