





Amidst Twin Suns

Alberto Checa



Oolite Arts presents *Amidst Twin Suns*, the first solo exhibition of Miami-based artist Alberto Checa. Through abstract world-building of reimagined labor systems, Checa explores motifs of intimacy that emerge from the experiences of the Latino working class tethered to systems of labor in the United States.

Alberto Checa's performances, built around brutalist, plaster-bound sculptures, intimately excavate the systemic experiences of the Latino working class while uncovering the unseen, yet public labor systems rooted in necessity, love and survival. Checa translates these relationships into his abstract mimetic aesthetics, doing so to avoid exploiting and re-traumatizing the communities whose experience his practice serves.

Production is a key idiom in Checa's work, appearing literally among work titles and as gestured through his performances – as a central motif and reinterpreted concept. Checa poses production as hypothesis, rather than conclusion, divorcing it from capitalist expectations. Checa's productions reject becoming concrete products, often re-used to aid future performances. Instead, process takes the place of production, ultimately dissolving the function of American labor systems. Through instilling production as performance, Checa privileges process over product, destabilizing the authority and function of labor. Movement, collaboration and the use of imagined prosthetics in his performances, both abstract and ritualize labor processes to transcend beyond mere modes of survival. Checa's approach reimagines systems beyond their mechanical wrath and breaks free from the futile labor cycle that pits workers inside institutions of control and welfare.

Challenging the notion of labor as an immutable experience inexplicably tied to production, Checa's installation and performances offer many recitations and addendums under the denomination of pre-production. A performance from the past creates objects for future performances, or at times, a new system is created to reverse a past performance. In any way, a platform is created for performers to interact with material, each other, and the curated environment under a reimagined system of labor. Thus, labor is understood as both intimate and political, independent and codependent, physical and symbolic. It becomes a platform for exchange and a space for public memory and care.

Checa's work is both documentation and inquiry into these systems but refuses the status of memento. Through disruptive yet vacant environments, alongside recurring symbols of labor, care and regeneration, his transient assemblages explore what lies beyond the apparent horizon, looking closer at the possibilities suspended in between two tides.

Careful graphite drawings of sculptures, some bearing imprints from sculptures, occupy the space alongside materials commonly found at job sites: PVC pipes, plaster, silicone molds, water vacuums, music, car stereos and miscellaneous hardware. Space becomes activated by audio, sounds which mobilize the bodies of performers while hands dirty with plaster, as they prompt questions about alabaster. All the while, sculptures are reimagined as utilitarian tools, constantly formulating new purposes.

A new kind of choreography emerges and a new way of understanding is ushered in. Amidst Checa's performances are propositions of new possibilities of being, building and protecting.

Curated by Jean Chung, an independent writer, curator and a long-time colleague of Checa, *Amidst Twin Suns* presents an archive of the artist's drawings, installations and performances that gradually transform the physical space of the gallery into a porous and decentralized network.

Alberto Checa is a multidisciplinary artist who immigrated to Miami, FL from Cuba in 2008. Seeking to recontextualize the labor of the Latino working class within the American landscape through empathy, obsession and process, Checa utilizes abstract world building and DIY systems that reveal the exploitative and futile nature of the Brown body. Drawing directly from the Cuban legacies of object improvisations, and influenced by the writing in Con Nuestros Propios Esfuerzos, Checa engages with utilitarian materials—such as PVC pipes, water vacuums and plaster—as foundation to his practice, building structural and instrumental sculptures that later, when combined with designated garments and curated sounds, activates as performance. In these processes, Checa complicates the birthing of a “final product” while fulfilling a “function”, often an arduous task, bringing to light the hidden labor and futile loop that exists in the process of Capitalist modes of production.

Checa received a BFA from Tufts University and a BA from University of the Arts London, Central Saint Martins. Checa has exhibited and performed both locally and internationally, including at Satellite Art Show Performance is Alive (Miami, FL), Central Saint Martins (London, UK), and Anderson Gallery (Boston, MA). Additionally, Checa was awarded Oolite Arts’ “Ellies” Creator Award as well as the Dean’s Research Award from Tufts University

Jean Chung is a painter and writer currently based in New York City. Drawing from a queer immigrant lens, Chung works primarily around narratives of intimacy that arise from in-betweenness and opacity. Expanding on the idea of observation and research as an act of self and communal care, Chung’s practice stems from a diaristic approach that includes repetition and the constant translation between photo, painting and text.

Chung received a BFA from the School of Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University where she graduated with the Dana Pond Award in Painting. Her writings have been featured in *Kolik Film Issue 39* (Vienna, Austria), *Pilot Press Anthology* (London, UK) as well in acquisition with Tisch Library at Tufts University (Boston, MA).

Mission Statement

The mission of Oolite Arts is to support artists and advance the knowledge and practice of contemporary visual arts and culture in South Florida. Oolite Arts creates opportunities for experimentation and innovation, and encourages the exchange of ideas across cultures through residencies, exhibitions, public programs, education and outreach.

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