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NOVEMBER 1, 2015

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BIOMYTHOGRAPHY: CURRENCY
Curated by Chris Christion and Jessica Wimbley
November 14- December 12, 2015
at
EASTSIDE INTERNATIONAL, LOS ANGELES



Join us for the exhibition *Biomythography: Currency* on view November 14- December 12, 2015 at Eastside International, Los Angeles in Los Angeles, CA. **The Opening Reception is Saturday, November 14, 7-10 PM. Exhibition programming includes: The video artist public art event, Videotag: Biomythography curated by Think Nguyen on Saturday, November 21st from 7-10 PM and Artist Panel Discussion and Closing Reception on Saturday, December 12th with the Artist Panel at 4:30 PM and the Closing Reception from 6-8 PM. All events are free and open to the public.**

cur-ren-cy 'kærənsē/

noun: currency; plural noun: currencies

1. A system of money in general use in a particular country.
2. The fact or quality of being generally accepted or in use.

Audre Lorde, self-described as “black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet,” defined the term Biomythography, in her seminal piece *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* as “combining elements of history, biography and myth”. The exhibition *Biomythography: Currency* is the third in a series of exhibitions that seek to investigate biomythography as a visual arts practice, curated by Chris Christion and Jessica Wimbley. Biomythography as Ted Warburton defines is; “*the weaving together of myth, history and biography in epic narrative form, a style of composition that represents all the ways in which we perceive the world.*” This expansion of perception exposes a multi-faceted, mediated, dimensional, and mutable consideration of self.

Currency investigates multiple forms of currency, in particular, cultural currency and the ways in which they are encoded and decoded in our contemporary culture. Artists in the exhibition engage in multi-media practices as a means of revealing and navigating cultural currency. They consciously or unconsciously invoke the literary form of Biomythography by fragmenting chronology, uniformity, and narrative. Their works juxtapose historical facts, life experience, pop culture, and mythology; challenging, forming and informing, art history, display, anthropology, identity, and ritual as well as personal, universal, and institutional perspectives and histories.

Artists Include: Albert Lopez Jr., Marton Robinson, and Glen Wilson

Albert Lopez Jr. is a visual artist based in Santa Ana, CA. He has exhibited his work in both non-traditional and traditional settings, from installations in public spaces, including receiving the City of Santa Ana 2015 Public Arts Grant, to galleries and museums including MEXICALI BIENNIAL at La Casa del tunnel: Art Center, in Tijuana, Mexico. Lopez's work is in various private collections including that of actor and art connoisseur, Cheech Marín that recently toured to the Museum of Aquitaine in Bordeaux, France as part of the Chicano Dreams exhibition.

Taken from the notion of the "American Dream", *Death of Apollo Creed* is a video and multimedia installation that comes from a place of nostalgia for the artist. When he first experienced this scene from the highly successful film *Rocky IV* (1985) Lopez did not understand the themes that were presented by Creed's patriotism... political and social issues that he considers to be relevant today.

In this movie clip, Ivan Drago's character, foreign and intimidating, represents the past and present border issues that inundate American politics. Creed's slaying following James Brown's *Living in America* depicts the constant social struggles between claiming patriotism and protecting foreign cultures on American soil.

The scene is also translated into Spanish to represent the significance of loss that occurs when translation comes into play. We leave behind our old ways, clinging on to conviction no matter where we come from. This scene is a constant reminder to the artist that through the *Death of Apollo Creed* we are living in America.

Artist **Marton Robinson** has an interdisciplinary background informed both by his studies in Physical Education as well as current studies which include completing an MA in Integral Health and Human Movement and a BA in Art and Visual Communication with an emphasis Engraving at the National University of Costa Rica. The result is a multi media art practice, which investigates modes of communication and translation of history, culture, and identity that challenges popular culture representations and assumptions. Robinson explores themes of surrogacy through objects, mining material culture in conjunction with mining the deeply personal - creating an elegant tension between subjective and objectives bodies/forms. Capitalizing on structures of printing making and video, Robinson pushes the media to function as a form of cultural debris, imprint, and shadow, embedding the images and works with new meaning and altered histories. In conversation with international artists such as David Hammonds and Kory Newkirk, Marton Robinson's work exposes the nuances present in the Afro Latino experience that deepens the critical discourse of works in the contemporary African Diaspora.

Glen Wilson's current work is anchored in his roots and experiences as a street photo-documentarian, while his practice also reflects a conceptual, multidisciplinary approach. Wilson locates his practice in crossroads spaces, where multiple histories and perspectives, individual and collective narratives intersect.

In his evolving series of photo assemblages *Gatekeeping*, Wilson documents his neighborhood of Venice Beach under the pressures of gentrification. Amid the debris of neighborhood demolition sites, where the modest homes and bungalows that represent vintage Venice residential architecture once stood, Wilson salvages objects merging sculptural and photographic forms. Wilson has been drawn in particular, to the entry gates of chain-link fence systems – popular over the years, as an inexpensive, more open and transparent way toward mark one's property line. It occurred to Wilson that each gate, often the only vestige of a former home that remains, echoing with its ritual swings and clanks, and many thousands of openings and closings, might be seen as a sort of neighborhood metronome, marking the past paces and rhythms of a place. In printing and weaving his images - portraits of neighbors and acquaintances from the Oakwood section of Venice where he lives and works – into the steel mesh of the gates, and onto the objects themselves, Wilson has sought to reveal these gates as objects of neighborhood memory and alludes to the mingling of the elements, diverse residents, ocean breezes and sun that have always characterized this unique seaside community. Wilson's work creates a confab within southern Californian assemblage which includes artists such as Noah Purifoy, Ed Boreal, Mel Edwards, George Herms, Nancy Reddin Kienholz, and Betye Saar that addresses the United States 21st century; under the pressures of gentrification, the dynamics of economic displacement have been unleashed, weakening the fabric of diverse neighborhoods, changing the demographics, the social, and political influence of the community's traditional stakeholders.

RELATED EVENTS

Biomythography: Currency | Opening Reception Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015 from 7-10 PM

Videotag: Biomythography curated by Thinh Nguyen Saturday, November 21, 2015 from 7-10 PM

Artist/curator Thinh Nguyen's curatorial project, Videotag is a revolutionary movement away from the "portable screen" culture embedded in video art. Its purpose is to expand video art praxis from its usual confinement in screens and monitors and present the moving image as a convergence of video and public art; utilizing public spaces as democratic social surface for projections as a temporal and impermanent form public art.

This edition of Videotag : Biomythography features video works that investigate modes of cultural capital as a biomythographic exploration of cultural currency. The event is co-current with the exhibition *Biomythography: Currency* at Eastside International, Los Angeles.

Artist Panel Discussion and Closing Reception Saturday, December 12, 2015 | Artist Panel at 4:30 PM | Closing Reception from 6-8 PM

By pulling examples from literature, the visual arts and works from the exhibition, as well as current events, this panel discussion utilizes interdisciplinary perspectives to addresses the nuances within ever shifting identities and how we experience/create our contemporary world and culture. Panelists include *Biomythography: Currency* curator Chris Christion and exhibition artists Albert Lopez, Marton Robinson, and Glen Wilson.

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Eastside International is located in the Lincoln Heights neighborhood of LA on the grounds of the Brewery Art Colony.

IMAGE: Marton Robinson, *Sin Nombre*, 2014 6.14 x 2.6 inches, Print over a paper. Courtesy of the artist.