



new art center in newton
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Color:Coded

On View: September 15 - October 21, 2017

Opening Reception: September 15, 6-8PM

*A Curatorial Opportunity Program Exhibition
Curated by Michael Covello Odalla and Alison Terndrup*

Artists: Alison Chen, Zhiwan Cheung, Michael Covello Odalla, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Kalup Linzy, Noelle Mason, Desiree Moore, Beth Plakidas, Elizabeth Schneider, Saya Woolfalk, Carol Zou and Michelada Think Tank



Images left to right: Desiree Moore, "Over and Under and Through," still from video, 2013; Zhiwan Cheung, "Reading the Rainbow," still from video, 2015.

(NEWTONVILLE, MA) - The New Art Center (NAC), in collaboration with guest curators Michael Covello Odalla and Alison Terndrup, is pleased to present Color:Coded. This exhibition engages with the layered issues and loaded history of color – as both an element of visual art and a social construct – through video work, paintings, and site-specific installations by a diverse group of eleven artists.

EXHIBITION PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Opening Weekend: Friday, September 15 – Saturday, September 16, 2017

Opening Reception featuring Michelada Think Tank: Friday, September 15, 6-8PM

Event: "The Equitable Classroom": Saturday, September 16, 1-2:30PM

Family Drop-in Day: Saturday, September 23, 1-4PM

Artist Talk with Beth Plakidas: Thursday, October 5, 6:30-8PM

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Color theory provides a formal set of guidelines for making and interpreting art. The interplay of paint hues on a canvas or the precise calibration of projected color in digital works can shape the mood of – and ultimately a viewer's encounter with – a work of art. Yet our experience of color is often translated through complex, culturally and socially defined networks. How does color enable us to express our own personal and group identities within these networks? What does the popular use of artificial binaries – such as black/white or pink/blue – ultimately say about our society?

Many of the artists in this exhibition use such color “codes” to raise deeper questions regarding individual and group identities. Their work explores the connections between aesthetic accomplishment and poetic, philosophical, and political messages. Video artist Alison Chen ties color relationships to ideals of femininity, social conditioning, and idealized romance through subtle cues such as nail polish. In his video “Conversations Wit De Churen: As Da Art World Might Turn,” video and performance artist Kalup Linzy explores melodramatic storylines and humorous scenarios akin to TV soap operas. Fictional artist characters compete for opportunities, exploring and upending stereotypes regarding sexuality, race, gender, and cultural identity through costumes, music, video and sound editing, and voice dubbing.

The concept behind Color:Coded was initiated while curators Michael Covello Odalla and Alison Terndrup were studying and teaching at the University of South Florida. “As Florida continued to make national headlines with Stand Your Ground shootings, there was a decided shift in how we approached working in the classroom and the studio”, says Covello Odalla. “Color theory seemed to be the perfect area to unpack these societal concerns, because color can be measurable and formal, but clearly has powerful influence on the conceptual as well. It allowed students to burst through the studio “bubble” while still learning time-honored visual techniques.”



Images left to right: Elizabeth Schneider, "Let's Work Together," mixed media on canvas, 2016; Carol Zou, "Didactic Material from Yam Bombing Los Angeles," 2015.

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Michael Covello Odalla is an internationally exhibiting contemporary artist who creates paintings, works on paper, site-specific installations, videos, and audio work. Covello Odalla studied at the School of Architecture, Art, and Planning at Cornell University, receiving his BFA in 2008, and the University of South Florida, receiving his MFA in 2013. Recently, he was nominated by the American Academy of Arts and Letters for an award and exhibition, was selected for the Florida Biennial in Boca Raton, and was one of ten artists selected for the Orlando Museum of Art's Florida Prize in Contemporary Art, as well as a Marlin and Regina Miller Fellowship recipient at Kutztown University. Covello Odalla is currently an Assistant Professor in Art at The College of New Jersey.

Alison Terndrup is a teaching fellow and graduate student in the doctoral program in the department of the History of Art and Architecture at Boston University. Her research in cross-cultural studies in Ottoman and Islamic art reflects her curatorial interest in facilitating dialogues that reach across artistic disciplines. Terndrup earned her BA and BFA at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania as a member of the Robert E. Cook Honors College. She completed her MA at the University of South Florida (USF), where she was one of the founding members of the Writing History, Art, and Theory (WHAT) student organization. Recent curatorial projects include Photographing the City at the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts as well as the exhibition catalogue for Sun-Kissed at the USF Contemporary Art Museum.

EXHIBITING ARTISTS

Alison Chen uses photography, video, and performance to critique the human longing for intimacy as a product of cultural conditioning.

Zhiwan Cheung works in sculpture, video, and performance that examines the intersections between national identity and personal psyche.

Michael Covello Odalla makes paintings, sculptures, installations, video, audio, and text pieces that merge formalism with the conceptual.

Trenton Doyle Hancock is known for his paintings, installations, sculptures, performances, and videos that are influenced equally by art history, pop-culture, and his own invented mythological world.

Kalup Linzy is a video and performance artist exploring and upending various stereotypes regarding sexuality, race, gender, and cultural identity.

Noelle Mason is a multidisciplinary artist whose work investigates systems of power, experiences of trauma, and the process of dehumanization.

Desiree Moore is a video artist whose work navigates the female identity as it progresses from adolescence to womanhood.

Beth Plakidas is an artist who uses painting and sculpture to create shrines that explore psychological processes of grieving, obsession, and spiritual development.

Elizabeth Schneider is a painter and digital animator whose work uses color and pattern to remix and reinterpret the hierarchies of cultural master-narratives.

Saya Woolfalk is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores the biological and sociological possibilities of race, gender, sexuality, and the environment.

Michelada Think Tank is an artist collaborative that creates projects that focus on layered human geographies and polyvocality through a community-organizing model.

CONCURRENT ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE: MICHELADA THINK TANK

In Residence: September 7 – September 16, 2017

Event: “Cultural Equity Speed Dating”: Friday, September 15, 7-8PM

Event: “The Equitable Classroom”: Saturday, September 16, 1-2:30PM

The Michelada Think Tank is a group of socially conscious artists, educators, and activists of color. MTT facilitates conversations with other socially-engaged artists, educators, and activists of color and their allies, to discuss creative ways of making change happen. MTT is committed to creating community around issues faced by people of color, while promoting action beyond the discussion.

ABOUT THE CURATORIAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (COP)

This exhibition is presented as part of the New Art Center's Curatorial Opportunity Program (COP). This open-call curatorial platform investigates contemporary culture through the visual arts. It makes possible diverse curatorial visions in a collaborative, non-profit and alternative exhibition space. Curators of selected group exhibitions receive a 1,000 USD stipend and administrative, promotional and technical support. Unique to the region, the COP is a collaborative vehicle through which curators and artists present thoughtful and innovative contemporary group exhibitions. It is the foundation of our Connections program for gallery education, and is often connected with our invitational Artist in Residence program. Learn more about the program and our upcoming curator workshops at www.newartcenter.org/cop.

CONCURRENT EXHIBITION: WEN-HAO TIEN: WEED OUT

On View: September 22 – October 19, 2017

Reception: Friday, September 22, 6-8PM

Wen-hao Tien has spent countless hours looking for traces of wilderness in the city, those often unwanted plants we call weeds. She gathered the weeds for this installation from across New England, and regrouped them into new plant colonies. The seeds of these plants, transported by wind and birds, flourish in a wealth of unexpected habitats, reminding Tien of the contemporary language of immigration. Rather than “weeding-out” plants or people, she chooses to imagine and create a “weeding-in”. She asks us to contemplate ideas of “wantedness” and “unwantedness”, control and letting go, alienation and belonging, as well as the wholeness of our society. Visitors are encouraged to interact with the installation by planting and pulling out weeds.

ABOUT THE NEW ART CENTER

The New Art Center in Newton supports the development of visual artists and cultivates a community that appreciates art. We offer a supportive culture that takes art and artists seriously. We serve over 2,500 students annually in hundreds of classes and workshops. Our faculty includes some of New England's best art educators. In a setting that is welcoming and accessible by public transportation, we offer an inclusive, multi-generational approach to art education that has served children, teens and adults at all skill levels since 1977. We operate one of the few mid-sized nonprofit exhibition spaces in New England, which attracts over 5,000 visitors annually.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 1PM-6PM, and by appointment.

These exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Transportation: The nearest T stop to the New Art Center is Newton Highlands on the Green Line (D/Riverside), then take the #59 North bus and exit at Walnut St and Washington Park. Alternatively, take the #553, #554, or #556 buses from downtown and exit at the Washington/Walnut Street corner. Call the MBTA for schedules and fare information. NAC is also accessible from the Mass. Pike, Route 128, or the Newtonville stop on the commuter rail (Framingham line).