



REPORTS
JORGE LOZANO

PD

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Life itself is a quotation
Jorge Luis Borges







I can get the gun that I



When death is near, then life shines with a very special glow. And I believe that's what you feel when you go in Colombia.

Laura Restrepo

I report, that is my profession, I report as a loud
noise testifies to a gun.

E.L. Doctorow

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Introduction

Mike Hoolboom

Jorge Lozano has made more than 130 movies since the late seventies. The artist works at a bewildering rate, particularly in the past half dozen years. It seems the muse is weighing heavily on his Colombian-Canadian shoulders, so he lets movie after movie flow out of his dream machines. Nearly half of his titles have arrived in a steady exhale in this late season of ecstasies.

He arrived in Canada in 1971 as an outsider iconoclast, pairing up with fellow Toronto Island dweller Mike Stubitsch to form “the theatre of it,” an absurdist duo of nihilist provocations. He worked crap jobs and went to art school where he became part of a nameless collective that included Gloria Berlin, Rebecca Garrett, Robin Cass, Robin Williams, Denise Cooper and Susan MacKay. Dedicated to “epistemological disobedience,” they created performance-happenings, videotapes and films, providing an urgent counterpulse to the alternative art establishments of Toronto.

The artist’s periods of making are marked by personal adventures and relationships. Though he is reluctant to appear himself in the work, he looks to his comrades to fulfill on-camera roles. He made and co-made half a dozen movies with/featuring Juana Awad in the 80s, identity parables and protests, all quickly shot and edited. He created a pair of intricately designed video animation docs and installations with Sinara Rosa that touched on their Colombian roots and North American racism via video graffiti titlings.

But his most enduring and prolific period begins in the mid-2000s with Alexandra Gelis, muse and intellectual confidante, a five star artist in her own right. Apart from their four collaborations, she appears in more than a dozen of his movies, and when she is not in front of the camera she is behind it, moving in for another close-up.

Their work is documentary-based, and ranges across North and South America, offering portraits of former gangster villages (*D-Enunciation*), the labour of the underclass (*Cleaning Practice, NaCl, Ecnerefsnart (Transference)*) or else philosophical essay portraits about the costs of looking and belonging (*Stratigraphies, Clorox, Collapse*) the interface of plant/animal life with their human predators (*Two Coupling Insects Teach Latin, Forests*).

Jorge has absorbed the lessons of mostly white movie avant scenes, and strained them through his own experiences as an immigrant, a person-of-colour, an outsider. Again and again he brings attention to subjects that don't fit—a poet gone temporarily insane, a deaf woman at a concert, teen killers in Cali, a weed growing out of the sidewalk—and invites viewers to live inside his generous receptions of looking.

It is beyond the scope of this volume to have writing accompaniments for all of his movies, but we've tried to give a nod to some of the highlights, and let a choir of voices weigh in, and the artist amongst them, unfailingly articulate, a critical and complicating voice. When the white canon of fringe media is rewritten, his achievements might at last be recognized as central to the efforts of decolonizing the field, creating new forms of beauty while working from an undercommons that is no longer quite so invisible.





1970s



1978 | Theatre of It

Jorge Lozano

Theatre of It (14:22 minutes) shows a series of body performances for camera, shot with a reel-to-reel portapack. I run naked across a room repeatedly, or am stopped at the bottom of a stairwell. Two men wearing masks confront each other, one is the queen from the dollar bill made by Rick/Simon, while the Sex Pistols sing *God Save the Queen*. I shake my head no. I say, "Video creates solutions." Again and again. I say "Real. Not real. Real. Not real." I can see the influence of Vito Acconci here.

I put a line of paint down my body, then I'm poked and explored with a knife while a voice reads Artaud's essay "Shit to the Spirit." He says that we're afraid to become a PURE BODY because ideas and religions get in the way. Later I pick up the knife and apply it to myself, I become my own oppressor.

When you're that young you try to embody everything, to reject the duality of spirit, and matter. You doubt everything, you can see through fake news, and social movements are imprinted in your body. Those times were as convoluted as today. There was the FLQ, IRA, Red Brigades, massacres of Palestinians, civil wars in central America.



The good thing about all this is that there was so much optimism. We discovered that you could destroy, without having to implement violence on the outside. We could destroy the medium to question the destruction that was going on in real life. Violence arose and was resolved in our own way through the medium of video.

With the video portapak we discovered the body. Because you can see yourself immediately, artists became more intimate. The sexual revolution and the portapak arrive at the same time. The punishments enacted by state systems and ideologies are felt first of all in the body, as well as the resistance to those systems. Through video, we were learning to take ownership of our bodies.

That's why some people can change because their bodies were taken away from them, their bodies were assigned. What is male? What is female? What is homosexual? The moment we recuperate the body we have a deeper sense of freedom.

These early works are premonitions of things to come, we took risks in order to see everything. We put so much in one tape, trying to define a body, and then the body becomes a body of work.



1979 | Event 1

John Greyson

Jorge Lozano was a major force behind organizing EVENT 1—his group performance followed the intermission. The upstairs hall where we were sitting, the church area, is like a school auditorium, and it was all used. Overhead projector shooting statements onto the ceiling; four monitors spaced around the walls; super 8 film on the stage screen; two ladders with a sheet suspended between at the back of the room for slides and a shadow show; wall to wall tech. Eight performers: Susan Mackay, Robin Cass, D. Martinovic, Katherine Thornley, Debra Carter, Patti Wilson, Bob Williams, Jorge.

Black. Girl on ladder with the Bee Gees in cassette recorder strapped to leg, dust mask on face and flashlight. Super 8 starts super slow, transit in city, and boy wanders in front of screen. Boy is asleep on mattress on stage. Boy sits in middle of room, girl in bathing suit and raincoat starts to cut hair. No, first there were slides on the sheet. Videotape. Every so often there's something new to read on the ceiling. Bee Gees girl descends, begins to crawl over the audience, passing out notes and caresses. Man rushes about like a butcher giving miscellaneous directions.



Behind sheet a light ignites, shadow of girl writing on her body. On two monitors close ups of her and her words. Hair cut, chair cut; the chair legs are sawn off. The illusion of tight choreography created by the assurance and spontaneity of the eight. Photographers everywhere.

Without a title the performance was about the potential of everything. Its success lay in its overwhelming abundance of stimuli; interpretation of the elements just doesn't work. A deluge on the senses, like a waterfall, and you don't analyze a waterfall. When there are so many signals of every type you can relax because you are allowed to miss things. This outline is incomplete of course.

The performance bestowed a certain magic on the hall, using all six surfaces and most of the space in between. The potential was in the individual reactions, the varying degrees of involvement each had while there, the potential of The Performance Space. A church it is no more.

Originally published in Centrefold, June/July 1979

1980s



1980 | **Untitled**

Jorge Lozano

Untitled (15 minutes) is a performance for camera with three men: myself, Robin Cass and Robin Williams. It was made in a single take on ½" black-and-white reel-to-reel video at the Ontario College of Art.

In the news there was a Halloween report about someone putting razorblades in a kid's apple, and I made this tape in reaction to that. I'm putting a razor blade inside an apple, and then offering it to someone else. It's about trust and male cruelty.

We're performing in front of video projections of ourselves. There was no script or plan, instead a tendency to have layers of sounds and words and experiment with movement. Dance was very strong those days and it featured a lot of walking. Lucinda Child's minimalist dance is a good example.



Those were great times when simple things were new and became incorporated into the arts. We were always looking for simple daily activities to become part of our artistic practice. Talking is a dance, walking is dance.

At the bottom of all this is to make no meaning at all. Many of us did that kind of performance, we rejected definitions of what was going on at the time.

We were an unnamed group, all going to art school together. Gloria Berlin, Rebecca Garrett, Robin Cass, Robin Williams, Denise Cooper, Susan MacKay. For several years we worked together and supported each other, appearing in each other's performances. Rebecca did a performance where I had to stand naked on one leg for an hour in a bowl of water. A lot of performances dealt with epistemological disobedience, creating confusion by overlaying events. It was about being here, having a presence. I'm still friends with all of them.



1981 | **Unuma**

Jorge Lozano

Unuma (Resistance = Life) (12 minutes) is a portrait of Alfredo Garcia, a charismatic man who came from El Salvador where he was traumatized by the civil war. In a single close-up shot he talks about going crazy, how his inner voice compelled him to look for a mountain. On the way he found a church where he realized he was Jesus. After walking all over the city without shoes on a cold winter night he found a house with a tree in front. The owners called the police who brutalized and arrested him.

"I had a branch with three flowers that represented the three Marias. I walked until it was night; I threw my boots away and walked along the ice. I climbed a tree and feared to die of hanging. The voice said it was better to turn into a bird than to die like Judas. So I threw away my belt."



There is a rectangular matte that appears over his face showing images from *El Salvador Will Win*, a film about the civil war. This film triggered international solidarity; people didn't know what was going on until it was made. It's one of the few cases where a film actually changed the situation.

As an immigrant artist you are exposed to community members who suffer discrimination, isolation and in many cases have nervous breakdowns. It is not easy to be an immigrant, it is not easy to rebel or to go crazy which is a form of rebelliousness.



1981

Red

Jorge Lozano

Red (11:21 minutes) is a silly thing I did in my living room with my art college group. There was Susan Mackay, Eva Mackey, Dimitri Martinov, Robin Williams and others, each wearing something red. An older man reads lines from a Red Brigades book about urban warfare while they walk around like zombies. Eventually they start walking faster, bumping into each other. I'm behind the camera, panning and zooming in a single take, and later I added layers of sound.

It's a critique of old revolutionary theory and the requirement that the young should follow them. Before I came to Canada I was involved in Colombia's student movement that relied on a lot of European theorists like Marx. I felt there were more interesting ideas arriving from Indigenous people about forms of government and resistance.

Antonio Muntadas saw this video in a class with Noel Harding. He hated it and called it reactionary, having silly white boys talking about revolution, playing terrorists. I wanted to disobey and show how ridiculous it is to go in circles around fixed ideas.



A Letter from Fatima

1984

Jorge Lozano

A Letter from Fatima (17 minutes) is a portrait of a revolutionary moment in Nicaragua. Shortly after the Sandinistas overthrew the military government I travelled there and met Fatima who was from AMLAE, a national woman's organization. She wanted to speak to Canadian women through my camera about the revolutionary achievements in defense of women in Nicaragua.

"We are an integral part of the revolutionary struggles. A great number of women are revolutionary vigilants."

The country was in a state of celebration because the Sandinista guerrillas had just taken power. I was shooting on the street as thousands of young fighters came down from the mountains to enter Managua and commemorate the 50th anniversary of Sandino's death. Augusto Sandino was a revolutionary who had fought in the 20's and 30's against US military interventions. This celebration of the triumph of the Sandinistas was so exciting. Sadly, revolutions get hijacked from their initial intentions and become a combination of rhetoric, corruption and patriarchal domination. It makes me wonder if men can really make revolutions instead of violent overthrows and takeovers. I wonder what happened to Fatima.



1984 | **Part 1/Untitled, Part 2/Does The Knife Cry
When It Enters The Skin**

Jorge Lozano

There are always references to my returns to Colombia. After you leave, coming back is a guiding force that helps you resist feelings of isolation. In the 1980s I shot a street march/demo in super 8 by actors at the Cali Theatre School. They were influenced by Brecht's political work and produced a theatre for the working class that I found a little condescending, as middle class actors tried to imitate and resolve the problems of the working class using literary agitation. They firmly believed they could make revolution. But they were beautiful and committed, regardless of whether I agreed with them or not.

Part 1/Untitled (10 minutes) is about the actor Harold Almonaco who was murdered by the paramilitary or the government's police. The actors painted their faces white, and called their demonstration The March of Silence. I wrote a voice-over narrative as if Harold was describing his own death. Poet Fred Gaysek delivered it.



I reshot the super 8 film from a piece of paper that was hanging on the ceiling, and a fan is blowing it. Special effects!

Recently I told people in Cali that I had this footage, but no one remembered, that's the sad thing. So many people gave their lives for revolutions but capitalism tries to keep us happy so we can easily forget the prize of happiness.

The second part is called *Does the Knife Cry When It Enters The Skin*. It's built from found footage and recycles philosophical ideas from Baudrillard about simulation and images. "How to stop the absence of meaning?" The meaning is about having to explain yourself, and what is forgotten. If people don't understand the culture you're from, the way they imagine you is like simulation. I want to denounce the killing, but how much of what I'm saying can be heard?

There are two parts because I'm split, a diptych. I have two countries and two cultures.



1985 | **Hygiene**

Andrew James Paterson

Hygiene (42 minutes) was adapted by Jorge Lozano and myself from a short story I'd written called *Black Friday*. Jorge had helped me make a melodramatic video *Trio*, the year before. *Black Friday* was melodramatic. In the early eighties I was obsessed with fifties melodrama and film noir. Jorge loved some visual aspects of those genres but was critical of their closed structures.

In those days I tended to be literary and literal, while Jorge tended to work against the text. This caused some tension in our collaboration but also some great moments. I think of the women's demo outside the bar (actually the Funnel). I think of the scene in the bar (actually Cameron House) in which the visual focus of the scene is on the two main female characters while the drunken "extras" discuss extra work as a means of writing scripts. *Hygiene* played cat and mouse with mainstream narrative. One minute it could almost be television, but then it would veer into a zone somewhere between expressionism and abstraction.

Hygiene also contains a great driving sequence that Jorge shot on Highway 401. The tape was shot in colour, and then we decided it looked better in black and white. But this driving scene remained in colour... it looked so gorgeous plus it was a moment of peace and clarity for the main character.



Geoffrey Shea

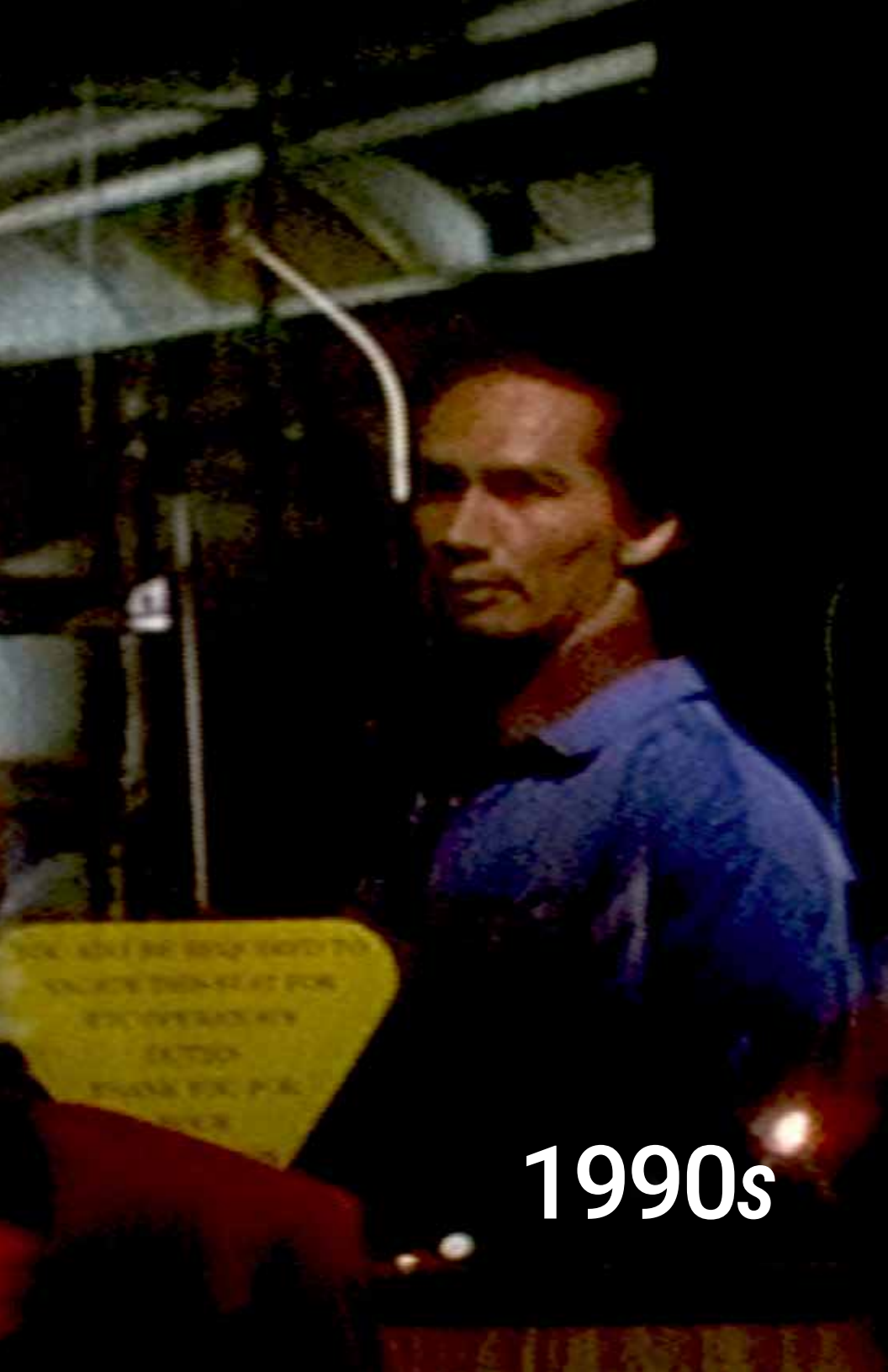
Andrew Paterson and Jorge Lozano's *Hygiene* was one of the most enjoyable tapes of the series. It was also one of the longest at 42 minutes and it played last on an already long evening. But hardly a soul stirred as this melodramatic tale about life, love and loss unfolded. Shot in a very convincing film noir style (who said you couldn't light video like that?) and making no bones about its references to Sirk and Fassbinder, it traces one woman's unavoidable departure from her straight relationship and her cheating boyfriend, through feminism and the dreaded lesbianism, back to the idyllic relationship and finally to a sense of self and unselfish love.

Ronaldo Jones' enactment of this character ranges from good to great and Johanna Householder portrays "the other little woman" with all the venomous intent that the genre demands—except with more substance.

Paterson's musical score and his brief appearance as a drunk spewing out fire and brimstone double entendres make good use of the skills he has acquired over the years as a performance artist, actor, writer and musician. He and Lozano have infused the tape with a stylized realism that is only self-conscious where and when they want it to be.

Originally published in Cinema Canada, 1986





1990s



1990

Limited Warranty

Jorge Lozano

Limited Warranty (7:47 minutes) was made with Eva Mackey.

The text is a random association of two texts by Paul Bowles and Charles Baudelaire dealing with the colonization of the other's body. It starts with a Bowles story about an educated anthropologist, a professor kidnapped in the desert. In a reversal of colonization, the nomads train him to act like a dog and he becomes a toy that everyone plays with.

The next scene shows the front of the Eve Theatre, the porn palace whose marquee promised new adventures in cinema. We hear Eva singing Baudelaire's poem "Le Vampire," while I did the music. In the final scene there's another electro-pop song with Eva singing, with very close-up pans of skin and body.

Each scene moves back and forth between the two texts. The idea was to capture stories that reflect the failure and cruelty of humans.



The nomads pull out the professor's tongue, and this loss marks the entry to their world and understanding. When you're colonized you suffer a loss, your tongue is pulled out and you become a toy. You try to be understood so you imitate certain gestures but then people laugh at you because you don't do it right.

Eva was an actor I went out with, a street-wise young woman who was part of the art college group. I was always reading and telling her things, and convinced her to finish high school and go to university. Then she started reading and telling me things and she became so academic that it was unbearable (laughs). She could be a beautiful man or woman. She performed in experimental plays with Ann-Marie MacDonald, and Carol McBride did a film with her. Smart, beautiful Eva.



1990 | **Samplings**

Clint Enns

Samplings (2 minutes) is an early video piece which Lozano describes as an “anti-identity audio-visual graffiti proclamation.” The work offers a series of eight extremely short provocations. Its use of text and videographics has a look characteristic of its era, though many of its themes are still relevant today. The text is the product of a sloganeer, but one who engages with poetry, philosophy and personal narrative. For instance, one section simply proclaims “la raza will always be/reclaiming “la identidad.” In another, love transforms into appropriation while fetishization turns into racism. A sample of some of the issues and politics in which the artist is engaged.



Mike Hoolboom

Video graffiti. In a suite of eight animated vignettes, lovingly made titles speak of Indigenous resistance in the face of genocide. Truth without reconciliation. "How much more? How much do you take from us?" Multi-panelled/layered stills show young Colombian faces or Indigenous elders looking back from a landscape of colour Xerox reworkings. The artist's face appears over a title that speaks of a struggle for tenderness. Each moment appears and closes, like scenes in a theatre. Just before the curtain call, the artist writes his most personal text, speaking of a relational break-up where he is accused of being a "sexist fucking greasy loser Latino womanizer." Here he joins the wounds of his intimate experience with the catastrophes of land loss and a struggle for rights in what he names "fire and poetry." Perhaps we could also call it: the art of revenge.



1993

The Three Sevens

Marc Glassman

Watching a film made nearly a quarter of a century ago can be a wearying experience. You know that you'll have to spend time giving readers some context to the footage, as if you've just emerged, the aging mentor, from a time machine.

What's terrific about *The Three Sevens* (21 minutes) is that Jorge Lozano and Alejandro Ronceria's film remains remarkably fresh and lucid. What's terrible about it is that its politics are as relevant as ever. It's shocking to recognize that the hostility towards Indigenous peoples and new immigrants in this country, and even more in Trump's USA has, if anything, been exacerbated since 1994.

The film is artfully constructed around 21 episodes, divided in three sevens, in which daily lives among Latinos living in Toronto are observed. Each of the chapters starts with singing from an Indigenous woman who says that the word land "also means history, culture and religion. We can't separate them from our place on earth."



Most episodes feature Lozano's co-director, the dancer and musician Ronceria, as a hatted Latino, who washes floors for a living, plays pipes on the street to accompany women dancing in traditional South American garb and tries to get immigration papers.

In a disturbing scene he unwraps a package of photos of radicals under investigation and finds the image of his sister. In a postcard he writes: "I live with the constant fear of being deported. My immigration story is still the same story. I'm not from here, not from there, not from anywhere... I identify with natives here more and more."

One can only hope that the alliance between undocumented immigrants and Indigenous peoples can truly make an impact in the next 25 years and that a future look at *The Three Sevens* can concentrate on its poetics, not its politics



1993

Cine Blanc

Rebecca Garrett

Tired of minimalism, tired of expressionism, tired of experimental films, tired of Hollywood movies, tired of precious originals, tired of the star system, tired of politics, tired of copies, tired of theory, tired of never seeing ourselves in the picture. Tired and at the same time loving art, poetry, music, melodrama, noir, punk, the simulacrum...

"The decomposition of the subject is consummated in his [sic] self-abandonment to an ever-changing sameness." Adorno

This was a time of rigid rules and rigid worlds. A world designed for a few: the equipment was so big it was designed to come between a person and the subject; cameras that only experts could figure out, editing equipment that struck terror in our hearts.



"The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it." Marx & Engels

We were going to do it anyway. We didn't want Europe or the United States. We didn't know where we were but were sure of where we weren't. We wanted to find out where we were.

pushed against a wall of seamless cinema, we refused seamlessness, foregrounded the seams
stitched our story from whatever was under our feet

We wanted everything.
We did not fit anywhere.
We had to do it.
We did not know what to call it.



1993 | **Tampon Thieves**

Kami Chisholm

Tampon Thieves (22:25 minutes) is an elegiac drama that blurs the past and present as well as dreams and waking life. Zena and Tita are best friends and anti-capitalist gender warriors, preferring sex work to shit minimum wage jobs. They're living the high life in the queer Latinx underground, but queer/transphobic violence and the impending deaths of their grandmothers haunt them.

The film is comprised of a series of eclectically related scenes, playing with space, time, and point of view. The film begins with the internal monologues of Zena and Tita, but repeatedly shifts perspective to the various characters. In one playful scene, as Zena's mother drones a racist monologue at Mario and Lalo, the two men repeatedly wink and smirk at her performance. Mario's chopping of vegetables conjures a materiality that expands to fill the screen and soundscape, as Lalo enacts bell hook's concept of the "oppositional gaze" while holding hook's book *Talking Back* in his hand.



At its heart, however, *Tampon Thieves* is a feminist intergenerational love story between grandmothers and granddaughters. Zena dyes her hair blue to honor her grandmother, and Tita longs for her abuela, manifesting her across time by bluntly telling her life's story.

As they die, the grandmothers occupy Zena and Tita's dreams, simultaneously taking over the narrative of the film. The grandmothers are rebellious and unruly, fiercely narrating their truth without watering down ugly details. And their granddaughters, the film, and us as spectators, follow their stories until the end.



1999 | **Eros y el Escándalo**

Madi Piller

In *Eros y el Escándalo* (The Scandal of Eros) (8 minutes) Jorge Lozano constructs a freedom of space and intimacy. The video, broken into three parts, immerses the viewer in a flirtation of exoticism and intimate sexual verbiage. Throughout the video, Jorge layers bilingual words onto images that speak of sensuality and plays with layered visual images of nature and nakedness as a preamble to a sexual encounter. The video strips away all sexual inhibitions and seizes all of the spectator's senses to reveal and assert the way Latinos like making it, aurally and with vibrancy.

Open to the senses, the viewer participates in a visual and audible sexual intercourse via a close-up performance by a woman figure (Sinara Perdomo). The onscreen text graphics and woman's voice echo a language of Latin eroticism:



Papi, ven, con tu puntita, tócame, tírame, jálame, el pelito, rico, así, durito, soy tu putita, maricón, la boca, chúpame, mámame, dámelo todo, chupar, chocolate, paga, dame, te gusta que te coja el culito, métemelo, en cuatro, come duro, puto, chupartelo todo, soy tuya, dame tu pipí, que grande, mi amor, dáselo a tu mami, soy toda tuya, esperma, loca, dame más, no pares, las tetitas, puto, bá jate, con la lengüita, chúpalo, con el dedo, coño, lo mueve, con la manota, agárramelo bien duro.

Daddy, come, with your tip, touch me, pull my hair, good, so hard, I'm your whore, fag, mouth, suck me, blow me, give me everything, suck, chocolate, pay, give me, you I like that you touch your ass, get it, in four, eat hard, fuck, suck it everything, I'm yours, give me your penis, how big, my love, give it to your mom, I'm all yours, sperm, crazy, give me more, no couple, tits, fucking, get off, with the little tongue, suck it, with your finger, pussy, move it, with the big hand, hold it really hard.





2000s



2002 | **The End of Thought**

Richard Fung

The End of Thought is structured like beads on a necklace, a string of discrete, gem-like sequences, each with a distinct amalgam of sound, text and image. At the start, where the eye of the clasp would be, the words COLOMBIAN CANADIAN SINCE 1978 appear in sequence beneath a photographic portrait of the artist. A PA announcement in French addresses passengers arriving in Toronto. A thin pink line creeps diagonally across the screen. Perhaps it represents the journey of transnational becoming.

In this bilingual video it's hard to tell location: Colombia or Canada. The footage is layered, hewn, pixelated, polarized, slowed down and reversed. Letters move across the screen congealing into words, words materialize into phrases, phrases propose thoughts, both poetic and political. A blizzard of white letters engulf a hooded figure. The words WIN and "We Deliver unlimited potential" pop out in a montage of Toronto's financial district, followed by military billboards with Sacrifice, Courage and Loyalty in lurid red. Capitalism, militarism and injustice are not bound by borders.



At the end of the tape, what would be the hook of the clasp, the artist recounts, “Whenever I go to other countries as a Latino Canadian artist, I am welcomed and they treat me with respect. When I come back to Canada I get stopped and I am treated as a criminal. They draw a pink line in my immigration form and send me to their offices.” Instead of a transition, the pink line is a barrier. Counterintuitively, a beat later, he continues, “It is kind of nice to be back. This is my home too.” This paradoxical statement captures the complexity of belonging in diaspora. For many racialized immigrants one is never and yet still at home.



2004 | **(I)ma)genes**

Gary Popovich

In *(I)ma)genes* (4:30 minutes) the artist's mother, barely attentive to her son's camera, blows him a kiss. Now what do you want my son?

He swims in her gene pool, in the unasked-for magic and loss of inheritance, coded in images, the interplay of life and its representations. She has loved and suffered, and her son, her witness, gives her a gift of representation in the images he engenders. Healing green leaves. Roiling, churning waters are accompanied by a whispered roar; intimations of the womb.

Still, what does he want? To get closer. She looks to his camera and then she looks away, pensive downward cast eyes, pregnant moments manipulated by her son's editing, birthing images that show a complex of bandages around her throat. Later we see her throat scars, as she whispers thank you to her family for the flowers they send, and for the new life that was recently born. Her whispered words are re-presented by the amplified echo of an offscreen voice.



He follows his mother to the bathroom; she is wearing a sheer nightie, revealing her underwear and body. He catches the closing door with his hand to follow her inside. What does he want in this transgression? She plugs her ears; she turns away. He summons the churning waters again. He recalls her beauty, wants us to see this beauty and her scars, slowing down her close-up face. The video image concludes, shorn and scarred, date stamped, still life, ending this portrait.



2005 | **The Black Box**

Mike Hoolboom

A brief quotation from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* ("be not afeard") begins *The Black Box's* (5 minutes) walk through time and space. Before the movie's title there is already a sentencing, a text that promises safety, though both play and movie are driven by storms that overturn every wrinkle of identity.

This is an artist's self-portrait. When I asked him once why he arrived even in the cinema with his dark glasses firmly attached, he could only smile. The dark glasses also belong to Frederic Jameson who remarked on their ability to convert the world into an endless surface; the exemplary postmodern object.

The movie pictures a deluge of memories as the artist strolls through architectures of the self in a flickering cascade of hand-developed pictures. Superimposing layers of recollection, we see boats delivering immigrants to the difficulties of new homes alongside glimpses of the Colombia he can never leave behind.



The artist walks backwards like the angel of history, through industrial detritus (how many bodies have been sacrificed to make this machine possible?). His body, particularly the extremities of feet and face, anchors this visual cascade. The restless storm centre of his life is fueled by revolts large and small, and the ruins of failed revolutions.



2005 | **Ideology**

Lina Rodríguez

An off-screen female voice on a black screen speaking about the inconvenience of her father's death constitutes the first "appearance" of *Ideology's* main character. After a playful cut to the title we are visually introduced to a young woman (interpreted by Juana Awad) via the first of six monologues during which she excoriates her father's hypocritical political views, his lack of emotion and his homophobia towards his own daughter. The "documentary style" framing not only calls attention to the making of these images (and the filmmaker behind the camera), it also reflects on the layers of performativity present in the news as well as in our mediated everyday.

The film's sudden turn at the end, as we see the same woman answer a call from her father and cry as she realizes he is not dead, not only exposes her contradictions, but also forces us to reflect on our own position towards her, her father, the film and the filmmakers.



Given our current times during which participation in discourse has been reduced to a click or a like, *Ideology* reminds us that although the monstrosity of others may seem easy to identify, we must look within and recognize ourselves in those monsters. Throughout his work, Jorge does not separate or elevate himself, he is constantly reflecting on his own position as an image maker and inviting us to question the convenient categories of good/bad, fair/unfair, left/right that can come in handy to make us feel better about ourselves.

DON'T BEG FOR THE RIGHT TO LIVE TAKE IT

2006

May 1968 Graffiti

Mike Hoolboom

In *May 1968 Graffiti* (3:27 minutes) the artist returns to a Euro revolutionary moment, when the streets of Paris belonged to micro-governments and collectives. Graffiti leaks into so many of Jorge's movies, wherever he travels his camera grazes across the ramparts and construction hoardings, absorbing signs from the street, news from the undercommons.

The titles act as a frame for pictures which remain abstract, flickering in heat and hope inside the letters, as if these ideals had not yet been realized, not yet attained form.

In the first title the spectre of the spectacle is summoned, and alongside it, Guy DeBord's *Society of the Spectacle*, a cultural analysis toolkit of a book that provided philosophical underpinnings for the student movement. Commodity relations are primary, I am what I own, an endless present obscures past and future.

TO HELL WITH BOUNDARIES

Debord: "The spectacle is a social relation between people that is mediated by an accumulation of images that serve to alienate us from a genuinely lived life. The image is thus an historical mutation of the form of commodity fetishism."

This collection of titles is an audio-visual graffiti of resistance.

Art is dead. Don't consume its corpse.



that sense of anguish,
of not knowing where you are

2009

Land(e)scaping

Francisca Duran

Unnamed landscapes pass on two screens. These are terrains of secret border crossings: North American secondary highways, meadows, back roads, parched hills. Sometimes a woman walks alongside or against traffic or fences. The two views are connected by a common line and poetry.

Jessica Morales entered Canada from the US on foot, bypassing customs using the routes she planned on Google Street View. Before that, Jessica fled El Salvador after she was viciously beaten by men hired by her female lover's well-connected ex-husband. Marked first by civil war, then by violent, state-protected machismo and homophobia, she walks towards a life without fear and hiding.

At around the 4 minute mark the screen fades to black, the voice-over stops and the title fades in. This is different than the rest of the video and late for a title, so it stands out, creating a rupture. It made me think of ruptures, spaces, holes, like Jessica's search for landscapes/openings to cross the border at.



to take a plane and go there

ESL first-language Spanish speakers put an (e) before saying many English words that start with an “s.” This also happens when Spanish speakers insert an English word into a spoken Spanish sentence. (e)special, (e)specific, (e)schedule, (e)stop, (e)Starbucks, (e)Star Wars. I have even heard someone say he is working in land-e-scaping before! It happens in particular when speakers are comfortable or animated. It is something that remains, or emerges like a weed. I don’t do it, but that is because I came to Canada very young and squashed my Spanish-language self to fit in.



you know all of this gets flooded with water

2009

Conchitas

Clint Enns

Conchitas (6 minutes), made in collaboration with Alexandra Gelis, presents itself as a diptych. One screen sees Gelis sunbathing while the screen is being partially covered in gummy bears. The second screen shows a landscape partially covered in seashells. One video is shot by Lozano in Canada, the other by Gelis in Panama. The gummy bears are wet and slimy and slide across each as they are being stacked. The seashells are hard and come directly from the land. The real is juxtaposed with the artificial, the natural landscape with its seashells and the beach with its gummy bears. *Conchita* is a diminutive for *concha* which means seashell and is a diminutive for Concepción, which refers to the Immaculate Conception, but is also a region of the Chiriquí Province in Panama.

The two worlds are held together with a text that scrolls quickly across the screen. The text “en una conversación no planificada” is from an unplanned conversation between two women, Christina Lomban and Elizabeth Perez, who hunt for seashells and casually discuss their fears including drowning and river snakes, an asthma epidemic in Chiriquí and their family dynamics. One woman states, “The seashells look beautiful when you string them together” to which the other responds, “Yes, I string them together.” Their simple exchange articulates one of the functions of artworks that is too often forgotten, namely, the social function of art making.



I like the oc

Deirdre Logue

Waiting at LAX for a flight east to PHL then north to YYZ. Eating all of the green Haribo Gummi Gold-Bears in the bag first as they are my least favorite. Red is next so I can stop thinking about Christmas. My pockets are full of sand from Malibu beach as I press play and *Conchitas* spreads out across my lap like a cat. It has dual screens, like 2 eyes forced to share a face.

On the left, translucent, wet once already, brightly colored candies covered in dirt specks are carefully crafted by shaky, monster-sized, foregrounded finger stubs into a lazy, juicy hill. The woman reclined on the stony beach bed behind is eventually consumed by a sweet, slumping lava flow.

On the right, a newly made mini-mountain of shell fragments piles high enough to steal the picture-perfect-postcard landscape from the distance. Millions of cackling, tiny, razor edges shift to sharpen each other into reciprocal sea glass. Surely a cut foot is to follow.

A polyphonic chat track of two women talking in Spanish timeshares the lower frame with fast moving English subtitles detailing early traumas turned adult terrors. Screens take turns, new forms forming, blotting out the before for the after, the same way places make you think of other places.



2009

Eye Vision

Jorge Lozano

Using found footage, *Eye Vision* touches on how the electronic visualization of silence in war and death has a double reading, a mirror reflecting multiple fields of interpretation, creating variations of perspective, inviting the viewer to participate in the creation of a meaning different from the one embedded in the initial conception. The title *Eye Vision* is taken from Paul Virilio's writing in *War and Cinema*. The relationship between blinding and seeing has been the motivating force behind the development of war and film technologies, technologies that are complementary and have nurtured each other from its beginnings.

Eye Vision is a phenomenological investigation on how violence is perceived and how digital technology is used to show and hide it. The use of two screens will create a sense of "standing streaming," a continuous flow of images in a continuous transformation adding to the discourse on art, technology and social concerns.

Originally published for exhibition at Pixel Gallery, HotShot Gallery and 1313 Gallery, Toronto, Canada in the framework of Digital Event, 2009.



IDLE / Encendido

2009

Clint Enns

In *IDLE/Encendido* (1 minute) two men arrive on a motorbike, and it remains idling as they disembark and walk quickly across the street. Once they cross, they pull out guns and start firing at a man walking with his friends. Given that the camera was on before the “action” begins, the filming, like the murder, is premeditated. The video is shown as a diptych with one screen capturing the murder at a distance, while the other presents the same footage zoomed in to reveal subtle gestures like the guns being pulled and the reaction by the victim’s friend. The video starts in black-and-white and transforms into colour once the “action” begins, further revealing the premeditated nature of the recording. All of the images look like they were shot on a security cam, but the camera does not offer protection, it can only bear witness.

The scene is very familiar to anyone who watches Hollywood gangster movies. The choreographed nature of the footage further blurs the boundary between fiction and documentary.

In Colombia these images circulate like short Hollywood films as reality becomes spectacle. French theorist Guy Debord argues that “the spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.” This video is a demonstration of Debord’s thesis while providing an example of its real world consequences.





2010s



2010 | **Watch My Back**

Ulysses Castellanos

In his four-channel video installation entitled *Watch My Back*, Jorge Lozano features silent footage of four Latino youth (three male and one female) from Toronto ghettos, their naked backs turned to us. The screens act as a Greek chorus that present four different yet similar experiences by immigrant, disenfranchised youth living in Toronto's public housing projects. Some of the characters relay their experience of being the "top dog" in jail, making the rules that others have to follow. Others speak of having to adhere to the rules while in prison.

The installation is an extended metaphor for something the youth refer to, the necessity to "watch my back." One of the males explains, "I never learned how to dance. Since I was young I had to protect myself and sit with my back to the wall." We see the subjects' backs in a stationary shot centered on the foreground, while the background images are in constant flux. They feature close-ups of the "delinquents" crude prison tattoos (clichéd images that one would expect to see painted on Hollywood movie thugs) bearing legends like "Only God Can Judge," "One Life to Live," and "Mi Vida Loca"; with images of dice, pit bulls, and guns, interpolated with shots from the youth's



rooms, where posters of pinup girls, Al Pacino in *Scarface*, and the gangster Al Capone hang on the wall. I wonder at such an extensive display of corny Latino stereotypes, but then the paradoxical reality of these surroundings sets in: as the camera pans away from one of the teen's rooms, we see that his home is clean, tidy, and suburban, and we see a young boy (his brother, perhaps) watching a horror movie on television from the family couch. The most disturbing aspect (aside from the harshness and brutality these people have had to endure) is the female teenager, in whose background image is the Toronto neighborhood of Jamestown. The subtitles tell us that she doesn't drink or do drugs, but she still had to spend time in jail. Her naked upper body with its back to the viewer implies that she is frontally nude, and facing the children riding their bikes, trash dumpsters, clothing lines, and passers-by who appear oblivious to her presence, like in a bad dream.

The four subjects offer solutions for the social problems that assail them, but in the end these solutions are reductive. The cause for all their ills is in turns identified as the white man, society, and the police. Or, as the young woman's subtitle reads: "We have no way of expressing ourselves because there is no money for it." The answer to this dilemma is that there is no clear, permanent solution. Lozano's chorus constantly makes this clear.



2010

Spatial Rhythms

Kika Nikolela

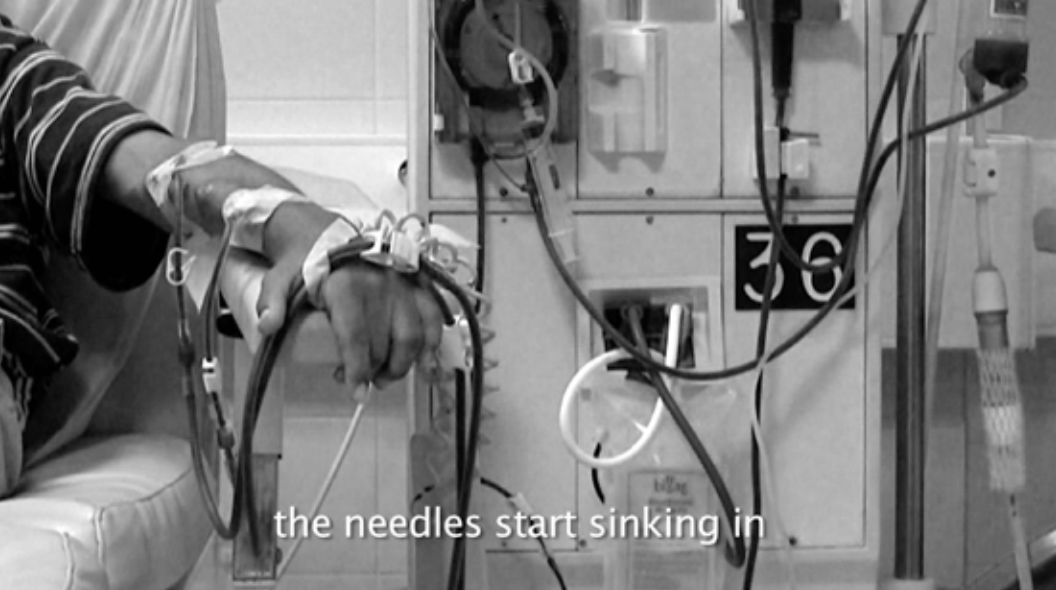
In *Spatial Rhythms* (6:46 minutes) a shaky camera zooms in and focuses on a smiling young woman who is looking and “talking” to somebody off camera. I put the word talking between quotation marks because she is communicating through sign language. She is a deaf woman, with her deaf friends, at a music festival! For more than half of the video we follow her movements, her expressions, her rhythm, and her communication with somebody offscreen. In the background, life happens: the concert goes on, people come in and out of chemical toilets. But she doesn’t care about the concert and we don’t care either; we barely see it.

The gaze of Jorge is drawn to what’s at the fringe, to what’s excluded from the main narrative, to what is silently eloquent, discreetly beautiful. He is, himself, an outsider, and naturally bonds with other outsiders, minorities, the underprivileged, and those who don’t belong.



Without much manipulation—a simple handheld camera, very few cuts—this short video makes me cry. We are seduced by the subjects' sheer liveliness. I look at them. They look at each other. They understand each other. They share something beautiful, and we are not part of it. We become the excluded ones. It's moving.

For me, *Spatial Rhythms* is a simple, understated work that summarizes a lot of Jorge's art and way of living. There is affection in the act of looking in Jorge's works. He receives the excluded with a gaze full of love and invites us to look at people and things that are normally invisible. That's why his work is so powerful.



2011

Death Match

Ulysses Castellanos

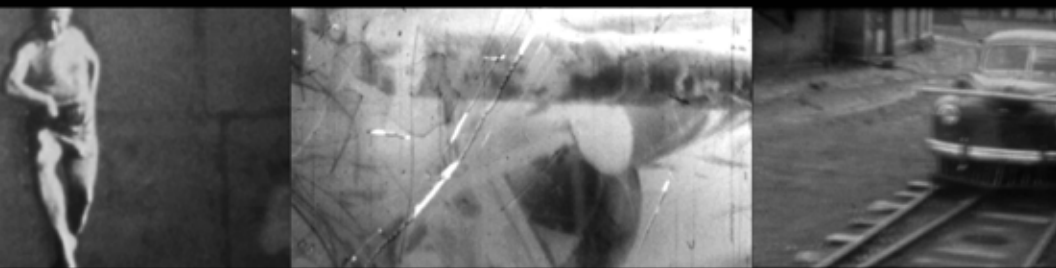
Lozano's *Death Match* opens with an onscreen text describing how his nephew suffers from renal insufficiency or chronic renal failure, in which the kidneys fail to adequately filter toxins and waste products from the blood. They are atrophied, inhibiting him from being able to urinate. The young man points to his hand and tells the viewer in horrifying detail how five of the veins were shut close, and he points to the part on his wrist where they inserted a prosthesis to take in the needles. He shows the scars on his abdomen where they inserted catheters. He stands naked, his small frame against a wall, his arms swollen, he is small and frail. His blood must be cleansed three times a week or he will die.

We see a shot of his arm connected to the machine, three different tubes running in and out of his arm; the tubes are red because of the blood. He talks about seeing his friends die, some from cardiac arrest, some from stroke, while they were hooked to the machine. "We look at death in a different way than normal people. For us death is something natural, something very beautiful, something that comes to some earlier, and others later, but we must accept and live with it. Because of all the changes in the machine you could die, suddenly, falling into a deep sleep from which you will never wake up." As the screen blacks out, a song by Rogelio's band *Death Match* comes on, recorded in the same lo-fi, basement-ghetto-blasters production style as that of a Norwegian Black Metal recording.



Kate MacKay

Death Match (6:09 minutes) is an unforgettable portrait of Lozano's young cousin Victor. More personal than political, its structure riffs off a public service announcement, as Victor's first-person descriptions of his torturous medical condition are interspersed with title cards defining the relevant medical terms. As Victor explains his condition and treatment, the camera examines his body. Close-ups are used as he describes the particulars of where catheters are inserted, shows us where veins have been closed, and displays the scars of multiple operations. When Victor speaks more generally about his experience he is framed at a distance with a long shot. We learn that of 72 people in the group that Victor began treatment with, he is one of two still alive. Victor's strength and courage in the face of constant suffering and imminent death are heart-rending, and the climactic chords of his heavy metal band *Death Match* serve as a testament to his spirit.



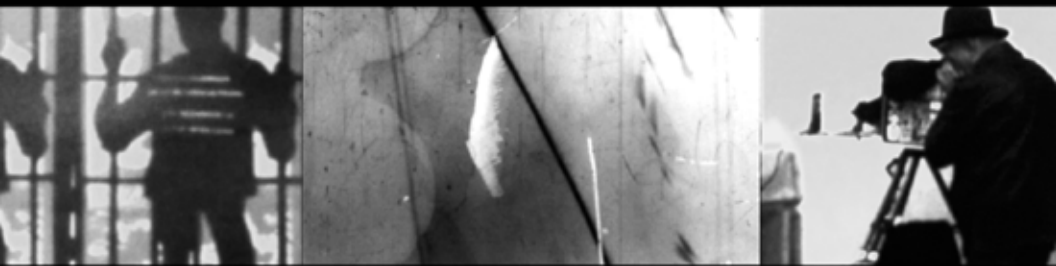
2012 | **Situations**

Jorge Lozano

In 1978 on Yonge Street using my Canon 814 loaded with Ektachrome (nice reds), I filmed the circular “Sam the Record Man” light bulb sign. With only the magic of my hand movements, I converted these lights into spirals and colourful zigzags, spontaneously action painting. To my surprise these largely forgotten three minute reels of super 8, reminiscences of a priceless time, will appear again in a new movie I’m working on called *Situations* (3-channel installation, 34:45 minutes). It will feature an assemblage of material made from the 1970s to the present reflecting on decades of queer rights struggles, feminisms, civil rights and anti-war movements.

I started to mix recordings from Europe, North and South America. Much of it shows public protests, feminist marches, gay rights, demonstrations against oppressive conservative governments. These moments of resistance are blended because we’re still fighting for the same things, each breakthrough becomes another threatening entry.

Europe was anti-Reagan and pro-Beatles. Sendero Luminoso was all over Peru. I was with Eva. Susan Britton was



the best artist in Toronto. General Idea made *Shut the Fuck Up*. Andy, Robert and the Government were at the Cameron House. As the installation progresses, I continue mixing landscapes, faces and cities in an achronological mess. The seeing and unseeing happens at the same time.

I used to live around the corner from the Morgentaler Clinic where some of the first abortions were being performed in Canada. Here is someone holding up a "Canadian Abortion Rights Action League" sign. The clinic was bombed, and it's amazing that in this country where the police know everything, they were never able to find who was responsible. The camera moves through crowds and faces. Here are the Bunch of Fucking Goofs, a punk band from Kensington Market. They actually became more conservative as the years passed. It should be the other way around, as we get old we should become more radical, like Delueze. There are protests in Toronto and Montreal, and many gay marches. Selecting moments from twelve years of Pride Week recordings became very painful because many are not alive anymore.



2012 | **NaCl**

Jorge Lozano

NaCl (14 minutes) is a two-screen video installation that references the ancient salt roads and salt industry. Salt was central for the making of the European empires, allowing them to change salt into gold. People from La Guajira make sea salt. Colonial divisions of labour have ensured that their living conditions have hardly changed. Of course they can vote now, but they still work fourteen hours a day earning low salaries for this painful labour.

The word salary comes from the Latin word *salarium*, which means payment in salt. A far-flung trade in ancient Greece exchanged salt for slaves and gave rise to the expression, “not worth his salt.” The trading of gold for salt has paved the way for the expansion of “western civilization,” colonialism and the rise of military powers. *NaCl* visually retraces this history using as a backdrop the bone-breaking, low paid work of the Wayuu people in the sea-salt mines in the north of Colombia along with some of the most often cited salt quotations from antiquity.



resistance

Forest

2012

Jorge Lozano

NaCl is the third in a three-part series called *The Business of Spaces*. The second part of this series is a multi-screen installation about potato fields in Colombia called *Forests* (7:28 minutes). These fields are largely deforested now owing to over-cultivation. The tape shows the beauty of this land, which persists even through its deforestation. This beauty, for me, is already a kind of resistance. Along with the potato and cattle fields in Cundinamarca, there are also the ancient fields of the frailejón in El Páramo del Guerrero (alpine tundra ecosystem). Bathed by the changing sunlight, *Forests* presents a topography of human redundancy and the ongoing resistance of organic forms.

"A rugged reality embraced." Arthur Rimbaud



2012 | **Genesis**

Mike Hoolboom

The artist assures me: the space tells objects where to go. Objects tell a space where to curve.

This movie was made on a floor in Córdoba, Argentina, shot by Alexandra Gelis during their residency. The floor is the ground of practice, the earth, the roots of experience. Jorge and Alexandra made *Cleaning Practice* here the next day, where Jorge gets down naked on hands and knees and scrubs it clean. And then *Money Makes Art* where he arranges dollar bills into the titular slogan. And then *Sample Text #1 and #2*, where graffiti is made out of objects arranged on the floor.

This movie uses three objects, all variations of splat balls, kid toys that can be hurled against the ground, splatter into pieces, then regain their shape. Three appear in succession: a pink pig, a tomato and a pair of rats. Borges suggested three categories of animals: those we eat, those we watch TV with, and those we are scared of. The pig we eat, and its colour underlines the inhuman/human-made environments of control it is subject to. Rats we are scared of, though our genetics are close enough to turn them into endless test subjects for our ongoing bio-control engineerings. Tomatoes are a delicate vegetable that have been transformed via gene modifications to resist germs and predators. A super vegetable flourishing row on row in the not-quite natural world.



Kuenta

2012

Chris Kennedy

A natural collaborator in his work no less than his workshops, Lozano has benefited most recently from the creative input of Alexandra Gelis, an artist who shares both his Colombian heritage and political commitment. Their dual-screen video *Kuenta* (19:15 minutes) offers a portrait of the Wayuu people of northern Colombia and Venezuela, celebrating their culture of weaving while alluding to the government-sponsored violence that so frequently invades their lives. A recurring shot of a mother and daughter placing sticks and shells on a small pile of sand is a central image to the piece—its referent lingers somewhere between a sandcastle or a burial mound. Balanced on the second screen are performances by Gelis, using salt and pink acrylic yarn—both central elements in Wayuu economy and culture. Gelis unravels a pink satchel full of salt (shot in reverse so the action reweaves the satchel), threads long strings of pink thread through a desert landscape, and rolls down a massive sand dune. Each of these actions adds symbolic weight to this affecting accounting—reinforcing through gesture how a people’s history resonates with their land.



2012 | **Stratigraphies**

Mike Hoolboom

Stratigraphies (48 minutes) is a hyper-kinetic travelogue masterpiece offering glimpses of scenes shot in Colombia, New York, Toronto and more. A female fantastic (Alexandra Gelis) knits on the fly (subways, bankomats, beaches) and makes audio recordings, offering the consolation of a central character in place of a narrative, a construction zone of identities and geographies. We are always on the move, as queer marriages give way to videogame palm trees, warm gatherings of friends are interwoven with public noticings, and everywhere the invisible workers are made visible again. The artist is always busy underlining the effort, the labour, the hands of the underclass required to produce this city, this view.

Jorge's shooting style is a beautiful amalgam of video lyricism and some unmistakably shaky expressionisms gleaned from a filmic avant-garde, but now bootstrapped with great elegance and electricity into the world of video. It is thrilling to see this unholy marriage of film and video sequencings, as if the artist has thoroughly digested the best and worst of two large traditions and then recast them in his own way with enormous freedom and fluidity. What a celebration he makes of seeing.



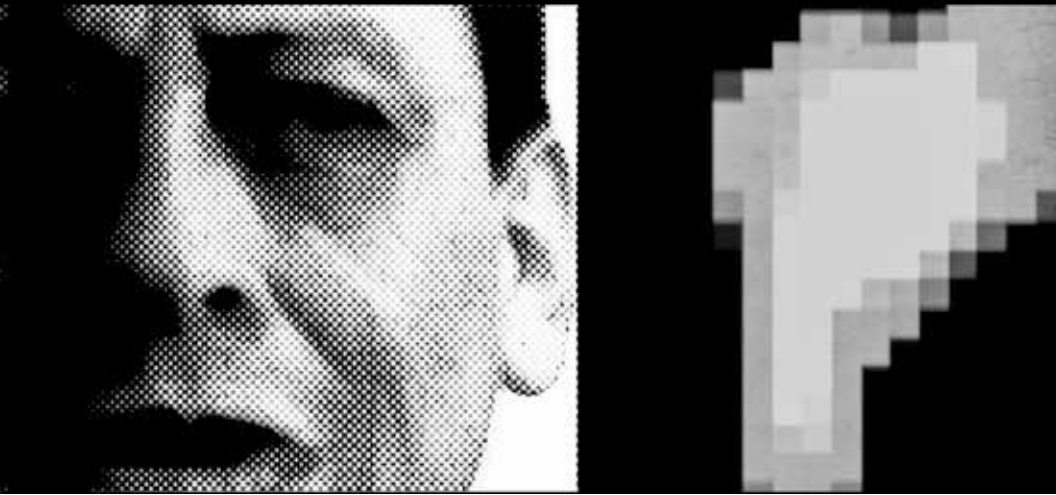
Jorge Lozano

The fascinating thing was that the person who was beginning to take shape began to look like Alexandra, while Alexandra was becoming the person that was beginning to take shape. Slowly this morphogenesis expanded into the surroundings. Every day we encountered new sites, we found theatres for these transformations as Alexandra and I let the video-film inhabit us. We started to intervene in the spaces that we met, we spoke with people in the streets, visited galleries and works of art we found significant, and in the end we intervened with ourselves. This psycho-geographic experiment found us becoming unrecognizable in familiar ways.

In post-production I discovered that we plan things in the past, and later on, sometimes years later, we enact them without knowing, and this is why we think that events are destined. We find ourselves living inside intentions we laid down long ago.

As I began editing *Stratigraphies* I started to think of philosophers and writers who could refresh memories I didn't have yet. I found moments of their thoughts on YouTube and recorded them and used this as a conceptual threading: Deleuze, Cortázar, Francisco Varela, Paul Preciado. My friend Deborah Root suggested the title when she detected Deleuze in the work and thought that the video-film was about geo-philosophy and becomings.

is slower and more complex.



2013 | **Underscore () Subguión**

Kate MacKay

Underscore () Subguión (28:08 minutes) is Lozano's twin-screen video portrait of a Colombian political activist living in exile in Canada. The unnamed man tells his story of the assassination attempt that forced him to go into hiding and then flee his home. The title refers to the gaps in the subtitles—indicated with an underscore symbol—where the names of people and places along with other information that might identify the man have been removed in order to protect him and his family. These gaps correspond to the interruptions in the audio where the original Spanish confessional have been edited out.

The man, now an exile, recounts how he survived two successive assassination attempts, the second of which resulted in multiple bullet wounds and a near-fatal car accident when he was shot during a high-speed chase. Similar to Botas describing his bullet wounds, this survivor gives a precise account of the extent of his injuries, his treatment, recovery and escape. On the left side of the screen, the man's head and sometimes his shoulders are tightly framed and slightly abstracted by a black-



and-white half-tone filter. His voice is also disguised. Toward the latter part of the video, we learn that as a result of his injuries and the passage of time, the man's physical appearance has been significantly altered and it is his voice that remains his most distinctive feature.

On the right screen, we see a near-duplicate image in extreme close-up. It's a complete abstraction that is still rhythmically linked to the view in the other screen as it moves and shifts with the subject as the man gives his account. The colour palette on the right, predominantly red and black, is suggestive of the bloodshed in his story. Purposeful interruptions, distortions and abstractions in this video, rather than being a distraction, focus the attention of the viewer while suggesting the oppressive political violence which made this man an exile.



2015

Within the Isolation of My Opulence

John Greyson

The advent calendar, a 19th century German invention, typically features a month's worth of hinged cardboard windows set in a bucolic nativity landscape, each to be opened one-per-day to reveal a succession of secular holiday frolics (carolling) or treats (figgy pudding) that count down to Jesus. Lozano's *Within the Isolation of My Opulence* (12 minutes) is a cinematic version of same, except that it counts up, not down, and the season it records is an advent of atrocities, not treats.

For each of the fifty days of Israel's 2014 Gaza massacre*, Lozano went out and shot a distinct Hogtown landscape. Quotidian compositions, banally elegant, each five seconds on average. He captures the stasis of a city seemingly at peace with itself. Then with each, he rips open a jagged digital window, to reveal scraps of agony, torn from the news about Gaza. Fifty days. An ornate Chinese restaurant against a calm blue sky, shredded by a screaming woman tugging at her headscarf. A listless maple leaf pinwheel turning in an empty planter box, punctured by a boy who's lost his stomach. Market fish, an ornate ivory temple, pink daisies... each grenaded by ruptured mosques. A procession of complacent TO street vistas,



16

punctured by grainy rubble. An eerie anxiety accumulates with each shriek of sonic torture as we realize that these streets are empty. This smug Toronto has no citizens.

We reach fifty and the cam pulls back to reveal the Gaza footage playing on a laptop on a desk in a Hogtown apartment. Hands pick up the laptop and walk from room to room, even as a Gaza mother weeps a prayer for her dead son, her subtitles invoking frail hopes for peace in paradise, and the knuckles grip the keyboard tighter, and the pace quickens, walking from kitchen to studio, until at last Jorge can't take any more and he puts his laptop down and retreats, and now her lamentations can finally recede, murmuring ever more faintly in the brown shadows of a room and a city that has lost its capacity for empathy, because we've all gone somewhere else. And the world slows, and the stop-motion glistening of a fecund tropical plant makes a book-end for this fifty-day performance of wan, wry, elegiac, despairing, plangent solidarity.

* Some prefer the term war, but massacre more precisely captures the David and Goliath asymmetry (though of course with the faiths swapped) of this 2014 installment of Israel's perennial, sadistic, vote-grabbing pummelling of Gaza.



2014 | **D-Enunciation**

Elidga Schogt

Seated on a plastic chair, her back to us, bright blue shirt, bright blue flowers, hair tied back
strong cheekbone—a profile.

“E”—to protect her identity. “E”—for “enunciation.”

Speaks matter-of-factly [en espagnol] of her mother’s success
running a restaurant cooking shrimp—her brothers murdered.

The Island of Múcura, El Islote Island, Rincón del Mar on the
Atlantic coast of Colombia. Sandy streets. Donkey tied near a
house. A thatched roof pier. Boys by the water.

*They did it because, unfortunately, my father wanted us to study.
Wanted us to be somebody—to study in Cartagena and they
learned motorboat mechanics.*

[The screen splits, its centre axis jolts on an angle, two turbulent
waves, unfurl side by side.]

They became well-known mechanics; when the Mafia came here



they were hired because they could modify the motors to run faster.

[A blue rope dances unrelenting, foaming crests.]

Off screen question from her—Who were they?

The paramilitaries.

This time from him—Are they investigating it?

My mother never received help from the government.

Kids walk along a beach. One carries a pot on her head. Two small wooden houses in an expanse of water. The sun reflects off the water—for a moment—a tourist's video.

If a woman had a fight with her husband, they would take her to the bushes, if she was unfaithful, they will take her away to rape her and then bring her back. Here in Rincon there is a farm called Palmar. They did their massacres there.

Final title cards: Gay men denounced and killed. Women raped. 20 years of terror.

Final images: Motor bikes, palm trees, pedestrians.

"E" has spoken.



2014 | **Cleaning Practice**

Alexandra Gelis

Jorge and I were in an artist's residency in Cordoba, Argentina. For *Cleaning Practice* (4:46 minutes) I was behind the camera, on the second floor of the studio looking down as Jorge worked on the floor. It was a long action; it might have been as long as 30 minutes. There was a polished cement floor, cheap and easy to maintain. Jorge continued the floor's polishing, creating a kind of shine in the rough material. As he polished different colours emerged, blues and pinks, and they blended with his skin color, which is also mixed. This mixed-race body syncretizes with the mixed-colour floor creating a double reading in the action/labor: the roughness of the ground reveals the harshness of the many cleaning jobs he took upon his arrival to Canada. His doing and re-doing actions become a repetitive morphing dance.

He's naked so you can see the tattoo on his right shoulder. It shows a North American Indian. It's the logo of Piel Roja, the cheapest and roughest cigarette in Colombia. It is a very popular symbol of Colombia, the brand that working class and poor people smoke. This Piel Roja graphic was most likely taken from the old US 10-cent coin and has many symbolic interpretations in Colombia. This image talks about the syncretic richness of our cultures, in the Cuban imaginary it is used for protection, displayed on the entrance door in many houses.



Jorge Lozano

Cleaning Practice is about all the cleaning jobs I did. When I came to Canada in 1971, I would get up at four in the morning and take the first boat from Toronto Island, then line up for daily work hires at a temp agency. They would send you for cleaning or moving. I learned how to do everything: carpentry, fabrics, construction. The first thing I did with my money was buy a banana split, which cost 10-cents. I bought a bicycle, a soccer ball, a 35mm camera, and corn flake cereal. I created my own darkroom in the bathroom.

I decided to do a performance with Marcel Commanda, a Mohawk. They called him the Bear. He used to fight the police who had to use five or six officers. He's gone through what too many Indigenous people have gone through here, he's been in jail, been excluded. He also did poetry.

He and I did something at Harbourfront Centre, an installation/performance. I made a video and his poetry was written on the wall. I got a tattoo for the performance. It shows a North American Indian, an image that can be seen on the US 10-cent coin. In Cuba that image is very important for the practice of Santería. When you go to the houses of religious people they have this icon at the entrance, it's their protector.



2015 | **MOVINGSTILL_still life**

Kate MacKay

Perhaps his most complex work to date, *MOVING STILL_still life* (33 minutes 2010-2015) is an eight-channel docu-installation that was inspired by the people Jorge met while working as an educator and facilitator of self-representation workshops for at-risk youth in Colombia, Panama and Toronto. The installation depicts the harsh reality of daily life in Siloé, a suburb of Cali, Colombia that is plagued with chronic violence. The community is a microcosm of the protracted civil strife afflicting this South American country. That conflict, which is sometimes described as a “low-intensity” war between government forces, right-wing paramilitary groups and leftist guerilla fighters (FARC), has cost tens of thousands of lives, displacing over six million people internally and creating nearly 400,000 refugees over the past 50 years.

MOVING STILL_still life consists of a series of seven interviews moving across the screens of the installation as the remaining frames become a contextualizing chorus of images, which refer both directly and obliquely to the individuals being interviewed and the stories they tell. By creating a proliferation of points of view, Lozano moves away from the usual form of the documentary that illustrates a singular argument or opinion and allows the viewer the freedom to navigate the work in his or her own way. The addition of excerpts from movies made in workshops he’s led layers fact and fiction, adding other voices to the work. Each section of the



work has a distinctive internal structure, using the eight screens to create different effects. The introduction traverses the spectacular Colombian landscape from mountain streams to the coast before arriving in the urban centres and bustling city streets.

The first interview takes place in a prison in Cartagena with a woman identified as Remedios A. We learn she is there because of her involvement with a paramilitary group that “cleansed” her neighbourhood of the gangs that had been active there. She has no remorse for her crime, she believes that her actions were necessary to bring peace to the area. As she speaks from one screen, the other seven contain images of the prison grounds and colourful drawings and paintings made by the inmates. There is a stark contrast between the innocent qualities of the artwork and the brutality relayed in the interview.

Throughout *MOVING STILL_still life*, Lozano manipulates the images we see in different ways, showing extreme close-ups on one screen of what might be a medium shot in another, using blank white or black screens to refocus our attentions, and slowing down the footage to suggest how time slows down in moments of trauma. In some sections, he also moves the screen with the narration across the bank of monitors, keeping us actively engaged as our attention shifts to the related images. Against this complex and multifaceted backdrop it is the voices of the Colombians that stand out, whether accepting of or resistant to their circumstances. Their intelligence and candour contradict the clichés that are too often used to describe the country and its citizens.

Full text at: povmagazine.com/articles/view/jorge-lozano



2015 | **Tactical Cycle-ordination**

Stephen Broomer

Jorge Lozano's *Tactical Cycle-ordination* (4:37 minutes) suits the intermingling thread of cycling and cinema that runs through Toronto's film culture. It tells us so by its dedication, to filmmaker-projectionist Martin Heath and CineCycle, Heath's long-standing, cycle-themed, coach house microcinema.

Tactical Cycle-ordination combines a fragmented, stream-of-consciousness text with a composition of Lozano's bike's front set and the ground covered in the course of a journey, from the vantage point of the rider. Some of the bike's parts assume the bulk of the composition: handlebar, head tube, bell, spokes, hub, rim. The rider records these details and the shadow that they cast on the ground, his left grip protruding, unclasped by the hand that holds the camera.

The contrast between the front set and the ground is dramatic—the ground a plain of white light, the cycle and its shadow a deep black ensemble of moving parts cutting into the land. A turn comes early, as Lozano's front set becomes a mass of hopelessly entangled shadows and silhouettes that crease



and blot out each other, and that, as they begin to overlap in superimpositions, cast an increasingly virile, heroic energy.

And through these deep black forms, now commingling in coursing energy, green and red begin to appear, later yellow and brown. The presence of colour has no ready relation to the objects of the composition, except to suggest again greenery and nature, as colliding energies form a harmonious ecology between the rider's body and "passing scenery."



2016 | **Forms of Emerging Behaviour**

Caspar Stracke

In *Forms of Emerging Behaviour* (2:32 minutes) we are basically looking “through” the image that Jorge Lozano features in his video. Why? Not because we recognize a window in the foreground. But there is depth. Here you can find nothing and everything. There is a pulsating, mesmerizing flicker, caused by a fast-running water stream on the glass window we are looking through.

The scene in this video immediately evokes melancholia but there is also something magical, beautiful. Presumably we see an airport tarmac from a window inside the terminal. A too-familiar moment from “liminal-land.” It is a state (both geopolitical and temporal) of being no longer here but not yet there either.

Passively we stare towards a depiction of labour where figures appear and disappear. It is a scene of hallucinations. Why can’t labour and hallucination coexist? They can, very well, actually.



We, the viewers, are the window. In the exterior, outside in the rain, four workers sweep the tarmac with large brooms. The fractured light through the water stream produces a vivid choreography of ghost images. As the scene unfolds we realize there is only one particular worker with a ghost image. He is accompanied by a fuzzily distorted, fast-wobbling double. The other two sweepers seem to mimic this play, sometimes exactly overlapping, as if this scene had been choreographed to mimic a naturally occurring optical phenomena that remains incomprehensible.



that she has ever seen.

2016 | **Resonance**

Mike Hoolboom

Resonance (7:22 minutes) begins in light, holding forth the most traditional values of artist's movies—light and shade, the pulse of nature reproduced as sublime abstractions. But titles interrupt the flow, and announce that we are in the year 1658, near Portobelo, Panama, where a wooden idol named “The Black Nazarene” miraculously cured islanders of a dreaded smallpox plague. The Nazarene is a life-sized image of black Jesus carrying a cross.

The artist's partner-muse Alexandra Gelis appears in sharp relief against the blue sky on their boat, looking one way and then another, as if, like Janus, her ambition was to have two faces. One fixed on the past, the other on the present.

We hear the voice of Ismael Rivera, a Puerto Rican singer who annually attended processions of The Black Nazarene in Portobelo, and even wrote a song about it, which plays on the soundtrack. He was central to the construction of a museum celebrating the work and lives of black Puerto Ricans.

From these shards of light the artist conjures a meditation on racism, blackness, the trials of the unwanted. It is shot at sunset, in a final bloom of light, as if time were running out. Because the camera was ruined via an errant wave, these picture fragments are all that remain.

other animals are not slaves.

Thanks for showing me how to share.

Perhaps I have failed you...
however I remembered that you loved
poetry when it was written using a
typewriter, you told me that they were
invented for blind people.

The End of Type (writers)

2016

Tom McSorley

The End of Type (writers) is a deceptively simple epistolary work in which a man writes to his mother thanking her for teaching him compassion and selflessness. A single shot of swinging typewriter keys hitting paper unveils the mechanical graphic representation of his thought. In the staccato sounds of that typing, we discern the fading away of one technological era at the very moment we witness a message being created by it: a loving, haunted message sent out across some distant Gutenberg galaxy's outer edges to a mother faraway. And yet, as the writer wistfully observes, the irony is that she will not even be able to read it because she does not speak English.

With precision and economy of expression Lozano illuminates, via the poignant, chattering argot of a now superseded machine, those overlapping, enmeshed "in-between" states of the writer, the reader, and the words themselves. It is an evocative echo of the paradox of language and of cinema: we are present in it and yet we are not; we pass through it and it passes through us. As we pick our way through the words, we are better able to connect across our many internal and external borders, as well as to re-imagine our place here together in that strange, ceaselessly recreated Canadian space of the "in-between."



2016

In-Visible Hands

Larissa Fan

In-Visible Hands (17:57 minutes) is a dual-screen video which traverses the streetscapes of two very different Toronto neighbourhoods: one very rich (Rosedale) and one very poor (St. James Town).

Focusing on the urban environment and architecture, *In-Visible Hands* is a primer on class division and inequality. As the camera tracks down roads in the manner of Google Street View, definitions of relevant words run along the bottom of the screen: *Class, Equality, Knowledge, Power*. Lozano chooses neither the prettiest possible views of Rosedale nor the ugliest of St. James Town, but the sharp distinctions between the two are clear. Where there are dense high-rises in St. James Town, there are spacious single-family homes in Rosedale. Where there is concrete in one, there are trees and open sky in the other.

Framed through fence grates, the St. James Town towers give a sense of imprisonment. The interior of an apartment is small and cluttered, a hallway grey and institutional (*Tight: cramped, confined.*) The Rosedale homes also exude a sense



of containment—but where the buildings in St. James Town resemble jails keeping people in, the homes of the wealthy appear as fortresses keeping people out.

With such dichotomy and separation, Lozano asks: how can we possibly combat xenophobia (*fear of others, the unknown, foreign*)? How do we escape the oppression of our surroundings? The definition of “zebra” gives a clue: not to be domesticated, to rebel, not to follow rules.



2017

Illegal_its impact on the body

Mike Hoolboom

Illegal_its impact on the body (33 minutes) showcases a harrowingly eloquent quartet of illegal immigrants living in Toronto, Canada. Each works a variety of routinely underpaid jobs, including dishwasher, janitor, metal shop hack, construction crew. Chief amongst the economic precariat, they are routinely exploited for free labour (you mean I have to pay you?) and sexual services.

The artist emphasizes the quartet's nomadic, border-crossing identities. One appears alternately as a trans sex worker, a gay man, a woman in drag. They change their name, their city and identity, trying to outrace the past.

In place of a talking head parade, the artist offers us a hallucinatory city portrait, each scene lensed as if from the vantage of a forbidden and alien presence, looking askance (sideways, the light streaking, hyperbolically coloured) at the neo-liberal showcase of this brave new city, remade in the image of its developers.



In a teeth-clenching scene one of the illegals binds up a poisoned and distended stomach patch (perhaps the result of all those toxic cleaning chemicals she was made to use). "I was never happy. It is as if life has passed while I was running away without committing a crime."

A masked face reappears as philosopher sage. The artist in multiply-superimposed video art garb stands behind the camouflage, offering a performed hybrid text via computer voice. He sounds the concluding note.

"Canada and I are in a co-dependent relationship. Thanks to me immigration officers earn hefty salaries to take care of their families and buy them a house. The same with the police. Worldwide illegality is a big business..."



2018 | **Recreations**

Alexandra Gelis

Recreations (5 minutes) is part of a two-movie series *The House in Ruins*. We are in the city of Toro, in the south of Colombia, close to the city where Jorge grew up. It's a very traditional small town with Spanish Colonial architecture with houses of red clay roof tiles. In the 80s and 90s the town went through radical changes. The boom of the drug trade created powerfully rich individuals who exercised political and economic control that changed small towns as well as big cities forever. One of these changes was the imposition of what we could call "Narcos Architecture." Each house was a demonstration of bad taste, wealth, power, and control. Toro was no exception. *Recreations* takes place in one of these houses, now abandoned. It's very common in Colombia to find abandoned houses because the owners are in jail, dead, or had to leave the country. In this house, we see bad copies of Catholic iconography made out of stained glass. The central figure is a fallen angel, broken now, with a large hole that the camera plunges down towards the central patio where you can see a five-pointed star set into a designed floor made of white, pink and red marble.

Shot in one continuous take, we slowly see a house that has been completely dismantled, even the frames of the



windows have been taken. The weeds, or spontaneous plants, are beginning to spread. You can see the mark of the gangs that took over the house. You see their graffiti tags, even drawings that resemble kids doodles. There's a Nazi cross. Sexual mutterings. Names. Local soccer team signage. This is not a big city graffiti aesthetic. The paintings are charming, painted with fingers; young people must have taken over the house.

Recreations connects us to the complexity of violence in Colombia, from the personal to the narco story, where everything is imprinted in architecture. Memories inhabit this house; it brings Jorge back to one of his strongest childhood memories. In a series of titles, he talks about how, when he was six years old, his mother took him under her skirt and led the family out of their house because their lives were in danger.

Jorge's fast-moving camera goes upstairs, then down through the dome hole, visiting all the corners of the house, reading the walls, looking for something and finding the remains of his memories mixed with presences of the house. I could feel Jorge as a little child escaping with his mom out of their town on a hot night.





MOVIES

Jorge Lozano movies

2018

Cara de Guanabana (12:52 min); The House in Ruins series: Reactions (5 min); How To Make a Beach To Get a Perfect Sun Tan (made with Alexandra Gelis, 4:13 min); My Book of Super 8 (super 8, 9 min)

2017

Illegal_the impact on the body (37:07 min); The House in Ruins series: Constraints (4:08 min); Punctuations (9:26 min); Butterfly Effect (6:44 min); Discontinuity (5:08 min); Finitudes (6:59 min); Implosion (4:24 min); Repetitions (4:54 min)

2016

In-visible Hands (17:57 min); Forms of Emerging Behaviour (2:32 min); Aloneness of Photograms (3:38 min); Unde Malum (5:30 min); Interferencias Gravitacionales (Gravitational Interferences) (16 min); Guerra Civil (Civil War) (68 min); Blinking Pathways (4:11 min); The End of Type (writers) (5 min); Resonance (5 min)

2015

Exodus (2:25 min); 2 Tongues are better than 1 (made with Alexandra Gelis, 3:55 min); Collapse (1:30 min); Time (lapse) (6 min); Tactical cycle-ordination (4:37 min); The World Upside Down (7:53 min); Amelie's Knowledge (made with Amelie, 0:36 seconds); Within the Isolation of My Opulence (12 min); MOVINGSTILL_still life (8-screen installation, 33 min); Homeomorphs (1:29 min); I Only Have Eyes for You (super 8, 10 min)

2014

Clorox (4:43 min); Cleaning Practice (4:46 min); Burrito (4 min); Green Bunker (2:24 min); Two Coupling Insects Teach Latin (10 min); Mode of Production (10 min); D-enunciation (19 min); Donkey's Teaching (6 min); Down Side Up (4:24 min)

2013

Underscore (..) subguión (28:08 min); Truefacts (30 min)

2012

Genesis (1:19 min); Money Makes Art (1 min), Sample Text #1 and #2 (8:46 min); Situations (3-channel installation, 34:45 min); Kuenta (2-channel installation made with Alexandra Gelis, 19:15 min); No Content (2:32 min); Stratigraphies (48:35 min); NaCl (2-channel installation, 13:56 min) Forests (3-channel installation, 7:28 min)

2011

The Business of Spaces (12:02 min); Guided Truth (3:33 min); Better Than Gold (4:30 min); Re-colonizing-Re-framing Africa (5:20 min); Is it Better in the Bahamas? (3:01 min); Reel-To-Reel (1:09 min); Flowers for James (6:12 min); Cel portraits (5:19 min); Akumasa (4:43 min); Laguna (1:35 min)

2010

Watch My Back (33 min); Death Match (6:09 min); The Real Thing (3:29 min); Spatial Rhythms (6:46 min); Ecnerefsnart (Transference) (3:10 min); Remembering the Portapak (7:55 min); EN NYC (1 min)

2009

Raw Memory (1:51 min); Conchitas (made with Alexandra Gelis) (5:50 min); Homophony (3:10 min); danZasa (3:02 min); Tabula Raza (2:39 min); Eviction Notice (3-channel installation) (16:02 min); Lola's Art (44:35 min); Idle/Encendido (1 min); Eye Vision (2:06 min); Reserved Territories (1:35 min); Land(e)scaping (18:10 min); Mental Representations Exodus 1 (2:25 min)

2008

The Burning House (installation, made with Guillermina Buzio, 15:37 min); Superposition (3 min)

2007

Shade (made with Guillermina Buzio, 2:37 min); Black (made with Guillermina Buzio, 5:45 min)

2006

May 1968 Graffiti (3:27 min)

2005

Ideology (made with Juana Awad) (4:50 min); Menguante (Waning Moon) (made with Juana Awad, 5 min); Nature Nurture (1:10 min); I Only Have Eyes for You (3:10 min); Aurora Borealis (4:18 min); Migraine (2:20 min); The Black Box (4:42 min)

2004

InDEEpSkin (6:51 min); Ima(genes) (4:30 min); Paquita la del Barrio (20 min); Discoverable Periphery (2:48 min)

2003

Juana's Grammar (with Juana Awad) (8:40 min); Incidence or Reflection (1 min)

2002

The End of Thought (8 min); Puerto Rican Obituary (20 min)

2000

Wemilere – Dance of the Orishas (10 min); Inside the Body of Knowledge (3:59 min)

1999

Eros y el Escándalo (7 min)

1998

Latinos en Tacones "The Pink Triangle" (18:30 min); Tampon Thieves (22:25 min); Cantos (22 min)

1994

Tampon Thieves (16mm, 24 min)

1993

The Three Sevens (made with Alejandro Ronceria, 21 min); Samuel & Samantha (25:11 min)

1992

Brief Chronicles of Glia and Luna (16mm, 22 min); Out Side In (2 min)

1990

Unuma (10 min); Samplings (2 min); Reagan Assassination (4:40 min)

1989

Limited Warranty (7:47 min)

1985

Hygiene (made with Andrew James Paterson) (42 min)

1984

Letter From Fatima (18 min); Part 1/Untitled, Part 2/Does the Knife Cry When It Enters The Skin? (10:54 min); Trio (made with Andrew James Paterson) (22 min); The Prisms (24:12 min)

1983

And Now This (8 min)

1982

The Chairs (22 min); Canceri D'Invenzione (21:03 min)

1981

Red (11:21 min); Strange Fascinations (25:14 min)

1980

Untitled (15 min); Cine Blanc (19:14 min); Accessory Transit Company (12 min); TV Shots (5 min); Ray Gun and Dream of Staircases (6:25 min); What's Going On (16:16 min)

1979

Unidentified Object (30 min); The Agony Of The World Owners (8 min); Aurora Borealis (4:04 min)

1978

Theatre Of It (14: 22 min)

1976

Ein Hund (super 8, 3 min)

1972

Untitled (super 8, 9 min); Untitled (super 8, 3 min)









CORRUPTION HAS BEEN