

Pedro Reyes

Ofentimes you think you are thinking when you are not, and often this happens when you are not drawing...

February 28 – April 15, 2017
504 W 24th Street, New York

For his first solo exhibition with Lisson New York, Mexican artist Pedro Reyes presents a group of new sculptures made from volcanic stone, marble and concrete. Surrounding these are over 150 works on paper, installed floor-to-ceiling on the gallery walls. This is the first presentation to feature drawings by Reyes at such scale or diversity.

Ranging from the intimate to the monumental, these new works resonate with both modern and ancient sources. Reyes has been looking closely at the history of statuary. Echos of Modern masters like Germán Cueto and Luis Ortiz Monasterio in Mexico; Frank Dobson, Reg Butler and Lynn Chadwick in the United Kingdom; Gerhard Marcks and Ernst Barlach in Germany; and Pierre Szekely and Marta Pan in France, may be found in some of the sculptures.

The materials Reyes employs in these sculptures further the careful attention to ancestry. Volcanic stone is a recurring material for the artist, and he notes both its integral role in the shaping of Mexico's landscape and its deep connection to the diet of its inhabitants, used for millennia to grind corn in *metates* and *molcajetes*, the traditional Mexican version of the mortar and pestle. Other works in the show range from the luminous marble of Carrara—long beloved by artists and architects as well as abstract sculptors such as Sergio Camargo—to concrete, which offers the artist new and entirely different plastic possibilities thanks to the interplay of cement and steel armatures.

The son of a professor who taught advanced engineering drawing, Reyes received informal training from a young age in the technical process of rendering three-dimensional objects. This early understanding has been an essential part of his practice ever since. For Reyes, it is a fluid movement between the creation of drawings and sculpture, and vice-versa, and the dizzying multitude of works on paper in this exhibition exemplify the complexity of the relationship. The 156 drawings papering the entirety of the gallery's east and west walls, extend Reyes's concerns with sculpture and art-making to encompass many of the radical thinkers that have informed Reyes's practice. They feature a varied set of artistic figures, such as German-American Social Scientist Kurt Lewin, Vietnamese filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha, conceptual artist Lee Lozano, Colombian mathematician Antanas Mockus, Chilean video artist Juan Downey, and Italian-born Brazilian modernist architect Lina Bo Bardi, among others.

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About Pedro Reyes

Pedro Reyes (b. 1972, Mexico City) has won international attention for large-scale projects that address current social and political issues. Through a varied practice utilizing sculpture, performance, video, and activism, Reyes explores the power of individual and collective organization to incite change through communication, creativity, happiness, and humor.

A socio-political critique of contemporary gun culture is addressed in Reyes's *Palas por Pistolas* (2008), in which the artist worked with local authorities in Culiacán, Mexico, to melt down guns into shovels, intended to plant trees in cities elsewhere in the world. Similarly, in *Disarm* (2013) the Mexican government donated over 6,700 confiscated firearms for Reyes to transform into mechanical musical instruments, which are automated to play a delightful, if surreal loop, retaining the raw emotion of their origination.

Issues of community and compassion are addressed in *Sanatorium*, activated at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2011, dOCUMENTA (13) in Germany in 2012, and in 2014 at The Power Plant in Toronto and The Institute of Contemporary Art in Miami. In this work, visitors are invited to sign up for a 'temporary clinic,' with the mission of treating various kinds of urban malaise. Therapies such as trust-building games and hypnosis are offered to combat common problems such as loneliness and stress, creating a democratization of therapy.

In Fall 2016, Reyes presented *Doomocracy* in the Brooklyn Army Terminal in New York. Organized by Creative Time, the "political house of horrors" was an immersive exhibition marking the confluence of two events haunting the American cultural imagination at the time: Halloween and the 2016 presidential election. Presented in the form of a haunted house, visitors navigated a labyrinth of rooms to explore the complexities of political anxiety, with the intention of fostering dialogue around the contentious state of global politics.

Reyes lives and works in Mexico City. He studied architecture at the Ibero-American University in Mexico City. Solo exhibitions include Creative Time, New York, USA (2016); Dallas Contemporary, Texas, USA (2016); La Tallera, Cuernavaca, Mexico (2016); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2015); ICA, Miami, FL, USA (2014); The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada (2014); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, USA (2011); Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA (2011); CCA Kitakyushu, Japan (2009); Bass Museum, Miami, FL, USA (2008) and San Francisco Art Institute, CA, USA (2008). Group exhibitions include 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan (2015); The National Museum of XXI Century Arts (MAXXI), Rome (2015); Beijing Biennale, China (2014); Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2013); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany (2012); Liverpool Biennial, UK (2012); Gwangju Biennial, South Korea (2012); Lyon Biennale, France (2009); and the 50th Venice Biennale, Italy (2003). In Fall 2016, Reyes served as the inaugural Dasha Zhukova Distinguished Visiting Artist at MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST) at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Ad Usum, To Be Used, a new monograph of Reyes's work, will be published in Spring 2017 by Harvard University Press. The fully-illustrated publication is the second volume in the series *Focus on Latin American Art and Agency*, which is dedicated to contemporary cultural agents. Edited by José Luis Falconi, it includes critical texts by Robin Greeley, Johan Hartle, Adam Kleinman, and Doris Sommer, as well as

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interviews with the artist and important scholars including Lauren Berlant, Michael Hardt, Alejandro Jodorowsky, and Antanas Mockus.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, John Latham, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British artists, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a number of prominent Asian artists such as Liu Xiaodong, Lee Ufan, Rashid Rana, Ai Weiwei, and Tatsuo Miyajima, as well as a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander and Haroon Mirza. Today Lisson Gallery supports and develops 52 international artists across two exhibition spaces in London, one in Milan and a fourth under the High Line in New York.

Opening Hours

Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm

For press enquiries, please contact

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