

## *Forced Autumn*

● Allora & Calzadilla,  
CARNE, and Ricardo  
Morales-Hernández

11.19 – 12.17, 2017

Curated by Stephanie Cristello and Nathaniel Hitchcock

Opening Reception: Sunday, November 19, 4–6PM

November 2017

*Dear N and S.*

*Nature is completely devastated, there is a forced autumn on a tropical land. I have never seen something equal. Complete towns incommunicado. The telecom is down on the majority of the island, there is only 28%, but it feels like 5%. Interminable lines for gas and food, and many situations of health and security out of control. I sense the crisis will reinforce exodus. I will consider it too, but later. I thank you for your help and ideas here.*

R.

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Chicago Manual Style is pleased to announce its inaugural exhibition, *Forced Autumn*, bringing together works by Allora & Calzadilla, CARNE Gallery—Adriana Martínez, and Mariana Murcia—and Ricardo Morales-Hernández. The exhibition is curated by Stephanie Cristello and Nathaniel Hitchcock, the Co-Directors of Chicago Manual Style and P.S. (Publishing Services), a dual-format project space dedicated to exhibition making as



Ricardo Morales-Hernandez, studio view, June 2017.

practice-based research.

In a letter to the curators, Morales-Hernández (b. 1980) described the natural effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on the island of Puerto Rico, its inhabitants, and its infrastructure as a “forced autumn,” equating the devastation wrought by the storms with the ongoing colonialist agenda perpetrated by the United States’ Federal government. Following this conflation of natural occurrences and geopolitical power structures, *Forced Autumn* brings together three artists and collectives whose works are staked on the upending of phantasmagoric images of the island through consideration of material processes, site, and image distribution. The selected artists utilize methods of appropriation and subversion to contend with the ‘exotic’ image of the island propagated within the colonial frame.

The exhibition will feature the American premiere of Puerto Rico-based artists Jennifer Allora (b. 1974) and Guillermo Calzadilla’s (b. 1971) video work, entitled *La noche que volvimos a ser gente* (*The Night We Became People Again*) (2017), most recently exhibited at Lisson Gallery in Lon-

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don as part of their solo exhibition, *Foreign in a Domestic Sense*. Conceived in dialogue with *Puerto Rican Light* (*Cueva Vientos*), a long-term, site-specific Dia Art Foundation commission in the El Convento Cave in Guayanilla-Peñuelas, Puerto Rico, the film acts as a counterpart to the physical installation of the work. Confounding footage of the cave, filmed by drone, with narratives of an abandoned petro-chemical plant, a sugar cane refinery, and the short story by Puerto Rican novelist José Luis González, from which the title of the work is borrowed, Allora & Calzadilla trace the colonial, cultural, and geopolitical implications of the film's composition through highly formalized takes and shape shifting imagery.

The work is exhibited alongside a selection of recent acquisitions by CARNE Gallery—an artist collective founded in 2014 and based in Bogotá, Colombia. Featured in *Forced Autumn* are works by Mariana Murcia, and Adriana Martínez, from the curators' personal collection, originally installed as part of the collective's exhibit *FAMA* (2017) in San Juan at the artist-run gallery km 0.2. In a series of vinyl cut outs on postcards of Columbia by Martínez, each covered with the word "FIN," (which translates to 'END') similar to the format one would find at the end credits of French Cinema, the letters partially reveal the image, though the black field largely obscures the landscape of the touristic images. The series is a continuation of her works, which were first exhibited as larger scale paintings on world maps at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) in her solo exhibition *Detroit Affinities*, curated by Jens Hoffmann earlier this year. Presented alongside these pieces are two works by Mariana Murcia; digital prints on seed packets. The seed packets, in dialogue with her ongoing sculptural series *Gerberas*, depict close-up images of the works, which are

comprised of flowers whose petals have been cut into squares. At once a mirror of the process, and an imaginative departure of the origin of sculptures, Murcia's flower forms are transformed into an image of itself, as though a bouquet made of out of pixels.

At the core of the exhibition are a series of paintings by Morales-Hernández—based between San Juan and Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico—whose studio is sited in a mountainous bamboo forest within the center of the island. Surrounded by fauna and large boulders, and containing a single white wall, the majority of his works are produced in nature—a type of "Green Cube" space, a term coined by Stefan Benchoam and Pablo Leon de la Barra, two of the curators of La Gran Bienial Tropical. In these works, a series of drawings on canvas executed in both charcoal, manufactured by the artist from the organic residue surrounding his outdoor studio space, and blue construction chalk, Morales-Hernández's imagery oscillates between the abstract and the figurative, depicting tropical, or paradisiacal, landscapes against the backdrop of geopolitical struggle on the island.

In *Forced Autumn*, alternative models are used as a method and means of display: caves, jungles, and the storefront, pose the site as a subject. If the hurricane can lay bare the colonialist power structure of the island, so too can these artists' leveraging of the landscape—as both a material and a site—hold the power to mobilize against Romantic images. Returning to the concept of the Green Cube, the context exists not only in opposition to the white cube, through the distrust of the neutrality of its space, but also as a method of display through which informalism is considered to be on the same footing as formalism, and which places life (and by extension, nature) at the center of art.

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### About the Artists

#### Allora & Calzadilla

**Jennifer Allora** (b. 1974, Philadelphia) and **Guillermo Calzadilla** (b. 1971, Havana) are represented by Gladstone Gallery in New York and the Lisson Gallery in London. Recent exhibitions include *Foreign in a Domestic Sense* (2017) at the Lisson Gallery in London, performative ellipses (2016) at kurimanzutto in Mexico City, *Puerto Rican Light* (*Cueva Vientos*), commissioned by the Dia Art Foundation for the El Convento Natural Protected Area, Puerto Rico, and *Gloria*, representing the U.S. Pavilion for the Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy in 2011. Their work has been widely exhibited nationally and internationally at museums such as the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, the Kunsthalle Zürich, Switzerland, and the Serpentine Galleries in London, among others.

**CARNE Gallery** is an artist collective founded in 2014 and based in Bogotá, Columbia. The collective consists of Thomas Bettridge, Juan Sebastián Peláez, Santiago Pinyol, Mariana Murcia, and Adriana Martínez.

**Adriana Martínez** (b. 1988, Colombia) studied art at the Universidad De Los Andes in Bogotá. She received a postgraduate residency degree from ISA, Habana, Cuba. Since 2011 she co-founded MIAMI in Bogotá, which is both a studio house composed of twelve artists and a space that develops exhibitions and artist talks on a monthly basis. She was part of *Take Me Im Yours* curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Jens Hoffman and Kelly Taxter for The Jewish Museum in NY, NY in 2016. She was invited to show in La Segunda Bienal Tropical curated by Pablo Leon De La Barra, Stefan Benchoam, Marina Reyes Franco and Radames Juni Figueroa in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 2016. She had her first international solo show in MOCAD Detroit on February 2017.

**Ricardo Morales-Hernández** (b. 1980, Puerto Rico) lives and works between Cayay and San Juan. His work has been the subject of solo presentations at Walter Otero, San Juan, PR; Unpainted, Munich, DE; and La Productora, Santurce, PR. He has been included in group exhibitions at Museo San Juan, PR; Manifiesto Composta-LAB, PR, Peripher, Zürich, CH; The Center of Photography at Woodstock, NY; and Museo Las Americas, PR.

### About the Directors

**Stephanie Cristello** (b. 1991 Toronto, Ontario) is a critic and curator living and working in Chicago, IL. She is the Senior Editor US for *ArtSlant*, and is the founding Editor-in-Chief of *THE SEEN*, Chicago's International Journal of Contemporary & Modern Art, online and in print. She is a frequent contributor to the London-based publications *ArtReview* and *Elephant Magazine*, and her writing has appeared in *Frieze Magazine*, and *BOMB Magazine*, among other outlets. She graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013 with a focus in Visual Critical Studies with a Liberal Arts Thesis. She is currently the Director of Programming at EXPO CHICAGO, the International Exposition of Contemporary & Modern Art.

**Nathaniel Hitchcock** (b. 1985 Mesa, Arizona) is an independent curator who lives and works between Miami and Chicago. He recently co-organized the reopening exhibitions at the Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, FL. Prior to his work with the Bass, he was a Director at Johannes Vogt Gallery, NY and a Curatorial Fellow at Rhizome and the New Museum, NY. He is the co-founder of East Hampton Shed, East Hampton, NY. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and studied in the Media Art Histories graduate program at Danube University, Krems, AT. He has organized exhibitions with Mernet Larsen, Jean-Baptiste Bernadet, Landon Metz, Jeremy Blake, Rebecca Ward, Brian Kokoska and Garth Evans. His research focuses on the intersections of art, technology and cultural discourse.

# Chicago Manual of Style

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## About Chicago Manual Style

Chicago Manual Style and P.S. (Publishing Services) is a dual-format project space sited in a garage in Chicago, IL. Dedicated to exhibition making as practice-based research, and Co-Directed by Stephanie Cristello and Nathaniel Hitchcock, the program features established and emerging artists to produce critical scholarship in support of project-based practices. Positioned at the convergence of exhibitions and publications, each show will result in the production and commission of critical texts on contemporary art by the Directors and an international roster of writers and curators.

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