



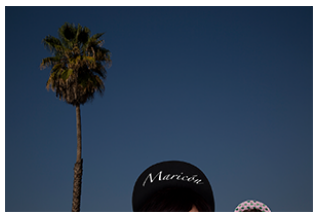


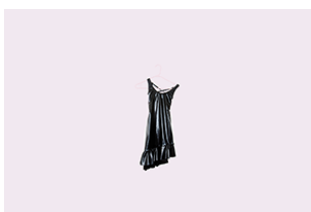


Oli Rodriguez

A Familiar Panting






December 7 to January 19, 2020

	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Native Plants</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 24" x 32" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>		<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Nipple Landscape</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 20" x 24" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>
	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Glory Hole Cactus</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 16" x 24" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>		<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Cord Figure</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 20" x 28" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>
	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Maricón</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 13" x 19" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>		<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Finch or Fucxk</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 8.5" x 11" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>
	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Pink Stairs</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 8.5" x 11" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>		<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Child's Large Leather Dress</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 13" x 19" EDITION SIZE: 10 + 2AP</p>

FLXST CONTEMPORARY

2251 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVE, SUITE 220 / CHICAGO, IL / 60616

www.flxst.co / info@flxst.co

	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Breath Play</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 13" x 19" EDITION SIZE: 10 + 2AP</p>		<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Palm Whip</i> Archival inkjet print on Canson Infinity Rag Photographique paper 2019 13" x 19" EDITION SIZE: 10 + 2AP</p>
	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Bear 1</i> Archival inkjet print on InkAID transfer film and lightbox 2019 24" x 36" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>		<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Bear 2</i> Archival inkjet print on InkAID transfer film and lightbox 2019 24" x 36" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>
	<p><i>A Familiar Panting: Bear 1</i> Archival inkjet print on InkAID transfer film and lightbox 2019 24" x 36" EDITION SIZE: 3</p>		

* Unframed editions are available. Please contact FLXST Contemporary for more details.

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FLXST Contemporary Debuts New Works by Oli Rodriguez in a Solo Show Entitled *A Familiar Panting*

CHICAGO, IL— Photographer, filmmaker, multidisciplinary artist, and Chicago-native Oli Rodriguez returns to Chicago from Los Angeles to debut a collection of new photographs for his first solo show *Familiar Panting* at FLXST Contemporary. Oli Rodriguez's photographs takes over the entirety of FLXST Contemporary, both A and B sides. In short, Jan Christian Bernabe, FLXST Contemporary's gallery director, notes: "The photographs explore the intersections of fetish culture and queerness within and outside the domestic sphere and the quotidian, using Los Angeles and images of domesticity as their backdrop."

Oli Rodriguez describes the show as: "*A Familiar Panting* acts as a palimpsest of contortions in photographic portraits and landscapes as markings of the routine and the ritual. The pieces navigate through fetishistic, mundane arrangements. They are playful actions in color, form, and constructed sculptural and domestic compositions of sugar, palms, plastic wrap, and breath play, reveling in performance and references to childhood. Incorporating the iconic landscape of Los Angeles as well as indoor domestic spaces, these are visualizations and conceptions of contemporary relationships between consumption and pleasure while investigating the manifestations of mundane objects in fetish culture."

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Writing about Oli Rodriguez's new show, Los Angeles-based artist and writer Maria Santana summarizes photography's potential captured by Rodriguez's photographs: "No longer is photography a medium that can only speak to its position in a decentralized, self-referential aesthetic system; rather, photography can be as full and rich as our bodies while maintaining its critical urge."

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Oli Rodriguez is an interdisciplinary artist working in video, photography, performance, installation and writing. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor in the Art Department (Photography) at California State University, Los Angeles. His intersectional research and interdisciplinary projects conceptually focus on queerness, notions of passing, visualizing the performativity of gender, explorations in appropriation, performative interactions with the public as collaborator, visualizing other representations of the AIDS pandemic while referencing historical movements in gender, racial and feminist histories. He curated the exhibition, *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Aesthetics* at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). He is a part of the monograph *Confronting the Abject*, named from his research themed class that he co-taught with Catherine Opie at SAIC. His forthcoming publication, *The Papi Project* (Candor Arts), archives the AIDS pandemic through his queer, POC family in Chicago during the 1980s. He also just finished his short documentary film, *LYNDALE*, exploring toxic masculinity, cyclical familial trauma and queerness. *LYNDALE* is currently distributed by Video Data Bank (VDB). Rodriguez has screened, performed, lectured and exhibited his works

Oli Rodriguez

<http://olirodriguez.com>

Please contact the FLXST Contemporary for sales or media inquiries.

FLXST Contemporary

2251 South Michigan Avenue Suite 220

Chicago, IL 60616

773-800-1470

info@flxst.co

www.flxst.co

on *A Familiar Panting*

Marina Santana

2019



Oli Rodriguez, *A Familiar Panting: Nipple Landscape*, archival inkjet print, 20" x 24", 2019.

Courtesy of the artist and FLXST Contemporary.

Oliverio Rodriguez's oeuvre could be considered to include the sentimentality (both affirmative and deconstructive) that has come to be associated with queerness and sexuality—sentimentality itself might be the essential meeting place for feminism and queer theory, which have often been kept apart.

I am reminded of Susan Sontag's essay "Notes on 'Camp'," which is all about embracing something and inhabiting it even if pointing out its flaws. Rodriguez creates a relationship to space that doesn't always expect women, people of color, and queer people to be critical all the time. But they may still engage with those critical spaces in some way.

Rodriguez evokes an ethos of concealment; there is something hidden from sight, yet there are the manifestations of mundane objects in fetish culture that you wouldn't expect. The objects and discourses he chooses to appropriate are often harbingers of doubt—quasi-

sentient beings that playfully tease and wonder more about fetish culture. Rodriguez resizes and recontextualizes prototypical “banal objects,” such as gummy bears, Saran Wrap, landscapes, urine, beer, and colorful ropes. There’s a lot of indeterminacy in the photographs that manages to create something recognizable and realistic, but, at the same time, unrecognizable and curious. No matter how unsure we are about the photographs’ nature or location, there is always an unapologetically material aspect, simultaneously concealed and expanded by conceptual factors.

Queerness is implicated in this history, since camp and drag (themselves often cyclical in their reliance on appropriation) draw heavily on melodramatic discourses. Rodriguez engages with nostalgia as a potentially recuperative strategy: in a way that de-centers the whiteness of the past and opens up a space for artists who were often previously marginalized to love the fragments of culture that they also interrogate.

My mistaken assumption was that there was no difference between the digital reproduction and the art object itself. It quickly became clear to me, however, that the photographic process necessitates close observation. With the photograph at my fingertips, I noticed for the first time the nuance of a landscape and bodyscape that Rodriguez captures; it is somewhere I haven’t explored, yet familiar. Entirely embodied, presence cannot be adequately understood in reproduction. The same is true for the camera’s viewfinder, which, in its vibrating multiplicity, provides a visual path into the scene, thereby enabling the viewer to step into Rodriguez’s photographic landscapes.

A Familiar Panting is a colorful and playful, but nevertheless incisive and critical, evaluation of humanity’s visualizations and conceptions of contemporary relationships between consumption and pleasure while investigating the manifestations of mundane objects in fetish culture. Rodriguez’s interest in a variety of materials exhibits a unified passion: to consider the embodied intersections between and within art objects. No longer is photography a medium that can only speak to its position in a decentralized, self-referential aesthetic system; rather, photography can be as full and rich as our bodies while maintaining its critical urge.

Oli Rodriguez

address: California State University, Los Angeles, Art Department (Photography), 5151 State University, Los Angeles, CA 90032

cel: 773.510.3273

website: www.olirodriguez.com

email: oliveriovrodriguez@gmail.com

Education

MFA 2009, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Film, Video, New Media & Animation (FVNMA)

BA 2003, DePaul University, Majors: Psychology & Gender Studies, Minor: Photography

College and Teaching Experience

2018-19 Assistant Professor, California State University, Art Department (Photography)
- Work with graduate and undergraduate students in technical and conceptual art work within a theoretical dialogue in the contemporary art world

Courses taught:

- Introduction to Photography
- Advanced Photography
- Undergraduate directed study
- Manipulations and Extensions
- Visual Arts Graduate Seminar
- Fieldwork
- Special Topics in Art
- Graduate Advising

2010-18 Adjunct Professor, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago,
Photography Department
Film, Video, New Media & Animation Department
Lo-Res Graduate Program
Early College Department

Courses taught:

- Graduate Student Advising
- Graduate Coordinator, Photography Department
- Multi-Level Photography Studio: Transfer Students, Photography Department
- Exploratory Media, Special Topics course
- Confronting the Abject, Special Topics course, co-taught with Catherine Opie
- Cinema, Race and Representation, Special Topics course
- Queering the Abject, Special Topics course
- Media Practices: The Moving Image
- Zeitgeist: 150 Years of Dada, Zurich, Switzerland to Berlin, Germany, Study Abroad
- Senior Seminar
- VIEWFINDER
- Undergraduate Independent Study
- Sophomore Seminar
- Queering Spaces
- Video Art & Moviemaking
- Advanced Photography
- Black and White Photography

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- Introduction to Image Making

2016-18 Lecturer, University of Illinois at Chicago, Art & Art History Department

Courses taught in Art History for Graduate and Undergraduate Students:

- Power of the Lens
- Reenactment and Reprise in Photographic Media
- Digital Photography

2017-18 Lecturer, Harold Washington Community College

Course taught in Art Department:

- History of Contemporary Photography

2010-12 Teaching Artist, Urban Gateways, Girls Got Game (video game course for young women), Digital Photography, Video I and Exploratory Digital Science.

- Teaching in various classrooms with students from age four to fourteen throughout numerous Chicago Public Schools.
- Teach within the visual arts to digital media, including photography, video, new media and video game creation.

2010-16 Teaching Artist, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Photography & Film, Video & New Media Department and Urban Gateways in collaboration. *Queering Spaces: Power, Race and Gender*.

- Instructor for an advanced video course for an intensive month long summer program for marginalized, POC students from Chicago Public Schools

2009-10 Multimedia Instructor and Supervisor, Little Black Pearl (LBP), Chicago, IL

- Taught a video and multimedia applications to Chicago Public School (CPS) students.
- Supervisory role with managing employees, budget reporting and fundraising.

Administrative Experience

2013-16 Academic Advisor, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

- Guide first years, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and transfer students as they plan their educational path through SAIC's interdisciplinary curriculum.
- Administrative duties include, course selection, schedule aid, register for courses, add/drop courses, appeal academic and refund decisions, check credit progress as graduation approaches, resolve course concerns and mediate conflicts, and work through issues listed on course progress reports.

2013-18 Admissions Reviewer, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

- Review undergraduate and graduate student portfolios.
- Travel every weekend in Fall semesters for recruiting.

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- 2012-18 Graduate and Undergraduate Admissions Reviewer, Photography Department The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.
- Review graduate student applications and participate in interviews.
- 1995-2005 Senior Administrative Assistant, Law Offices of Robin Potter.
- Clerical, billing and administrative support.

Professional Experience

Solo Exhibitions

- 2020 *The Papi Project*, Iceberg Projects, Chicago, IL
- 2019 *The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal*, Bert Green Fine Art Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2019 *A familiar panting.*, FLXST Contemporary, Chicago, IL
- 2016 *The Last Seduction*, Bert Green Fine Art Gallery, Chicago, IL

Group Exhibitions

- 2019 *New Editions*, FLXST Contemporary, Chicago, IL
- 2017 *Art, AIDS in America*, Alphawood Foundation, Chicago, IL
And one day this kid will get larger, DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL
HE: Questioning and Queering Masculinity, Last Projects, Los Angeles, CA
Precariat, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
The Petty Biennale, The Arts Incubator Space, University of Chicago, IL
- 2016 *Hot Seven: The Chicago Breakdown*, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, IL
Hot Seven: The Chicago Brown, The Leroy Neiman Center, Chicago, IL
- 2015 *Pearly Foam*, David Weinberg Photography Gallery, Chicago, IL
Tertiary Dimensions, Sector 2337, Chicago, IL
Confronting the Abject, Flats Studio, Chicago, IL
"I want something more than my husband and my house.", The Kinsey Institute, Bloomington, IN
I want something more than my husband and my house., Chicago Art Coalition
Never Satisfied, Defibrillator, Chicago IL
Love to Love You, Roots and Culture, Chicago IL
Preview, Chicago Art Coalition
Valentine's Day, Slow Gallery, Chicago IL
- 2014 *Transient*, Various Remote sites, West Hollywood, Los Angeles, CA
The Markings Project, The Kinsey Institute, Bloomington, IN
I want something more than my husband and my house, Chicago Art Coalition
Never Satisfied, Defibrillator, Chicago IL
Preview, Chicago Art Coalition
- 2013 *The Baseball Project* at Athleticism: Trophy, and Moments of Exertion, Park District #39, Chicago IL
The Papi Project at Edition Chicago, Chicago Art Coalition
The Papi Project in *Archetype Drift*, Johalla Projects, Chicago, IL
The Papi Project in *Point of Departure*, Arcade Gallery, Columbia College Chicago
The Baseball Project, *Otherwise*, Beige Gallery, Memphis, TN

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The Shaving Project, The Baseball Project & The Papi Project Co-Prosperity Sphere, Chicago, IL

The Papi Project, The Kinsey Institute, Bloomington, IN

The Papi Project, Hull House Museum, Chicago, IL

The Baseball Project & The Papi Project in *The Participants*, Denny Gallery, New York NY

The Markings Project, Heaven Gallery, Chicago, IL

The Markings Project in *Doing Your Dirty Work*, Center for Sex and Culture, San Francisco, CA

2012 *The Papi Project*, Deconstructing the Classroom, Reconstructing the Queer, Roxaboxen Gallery, Chicago, IL

2010 Exhibition: *The Nanny Project*, Co-Prosperity Sphere, Chicago, IL

2009 Exhibition: *The Baseball Project*, Bridge Art Fair, New York, NY

Exhibition: *The Baseball Project*, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, IL

Exhibition: *The Baseball Project*, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL

Exhibition: *The Baseball Project*, Swimming Pool Project, Chicago, IL

Exhibition: *The Baseball Project*, Co-Prosperity Sphere, Chicago, IL

Screenings/Performances

2019 Screening: Queering Art History: A Symposium, including *The Papi Project*, New York University (NYU)

Screening: *LYNDALE*, Rockaway Film Festival, New York, NY

Screening: *LYNDALE*, Onion City Film Festival, Chicago Filmmakers

Screening: *LYNDALE*, Iowa City International Documentary Film Festival

2016 Screening: *The Baseball Project*, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, IL

2015 Screening: *The Baseball Project* at *Gender Reel*, New York University

Screening: *I want something more than my husband and my house and Untitled*, Bijou Theatre, Chicago, IL

Screening: "Why Marriage?" Durst Center Convent, Chicago IL

Screening: *The Papi Project*, 6018 NORTH Gallery and Performance Space

Performance: The People in Dining Room 5 Wish to Have Your Attention, CAA, Chicago IL

2014 Screening: *The Marking Project and Untitled*, Bijou Theatre, Chicago, IL

Performance: *The Papi Project* at 6018 NORTH presents ESCAPE GROUP's

The People in Dining Room 5 Wish to Have Your Attention, CAA, Chicago IL

Screening/Exhibition: "Why Marriage?" Durst Center Convent, Chicago IL

2012 Screening: *For a long time, all I could do was surrender*, CoWorker Projects at Entwine, New York, NY

Screening: *Untitled (The Fairytale Series)*, Roxaboxen, Chicago IL Collaborator: BCF

Screening: *The Baseball Project and The Papi Project*, New Museum, New York, New York

2011 Performance: *Untitled (surrender)*, Little Berlin, Philadelphia, PA, Collaborator: Marissa Perel

Screening: *The Nanny Project*, Seattle Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, Seattle, WA

Exhibition Video of Performance: *Parole*, Art Institute of Chicago, Artist: Sharon Hayes

Screening: *The Nanny Project*, TG Film Festival, Los Angeles, CA

Performance: *Magnetic Affinities and Altered Relations*, Outerspace Gallery, Chicago, IL, Collaborator: Marissa Perel

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- Performance and Exhibition: *For a long time, all I could do was surrender*, Spoke Gallery, Chicago, IL, Collaborator: Marissa Perel
Screening: *The Nanny Project*, Schwarzer Kanal, Berlin, Germany
Performance: Links Hall, *root shock*, Chicago, IL, Collaborator: Ni'Ja Whitson
Screening: *The Baseball Project*, Cal Arts, Valencia, CA
Screening: *Push and Play*, Nightingale, Chicago, IL
Performance: FAMILY PORTRAIT, Pop Up Loop Studio, Chicago, IL Collaborators: Clover Morell & Marissa Perel
- 2010 Performance in *Parole*, Artist: Sharon Hayes, Performed live and video: Dia Beacon and Smart Museum at the University of Chicago IL
Screening: *The Nanny Project*, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Screening: *The Baseball Project*, Schwarzer Kanal, Berlin, Germany
Exhibition Video of Performance: *Parole*, Whitney Biennial, New York, NY, Artist: Sharon Hayes
- 2009 Screening: *Untitled (The Fairytale Series)*, Threat Level, Chicago, IL
Collaborator: BCF
Screening: *Untitled (The Fairytale Series)*, Schwarzer Kanal, Berlin, Germany, Collaborator: BCF
- 2005 Screening: *5ive*, Women in the Director's Chair, Chicago, IL
Screening: *5ive*, Columbia College, Chicago, IL
Screening: *5ive*, The Cultural Center, Chicago, IL
- 2004 Screening: *Ma and Son*, Columbia College, Chicago, IL
Screening: *Ma and Son*, DIY Convention, San Francisco, CA

Panels/Symposiums/Moderator/Visiting Artist Lectures/Residencies/Curator/Book Launches

- 2019 Panelist: *Queer Work / Queer Archives*, including *The Papi Project*, College Art Association (CAA), New York, NY
Visiting Artist Lecture: University of California, Riverside
- 2018 Visiting Artist Lecture: Braunschweig University of Art, HBK, Germany
Visiting Artist Lecture: Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
- 2017 Panelist: *Other Media: Decolonizing Practices and Cyborg Ontologies* including *The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal*, College Art Association (CAA), New York, NY
Panelist: *Be Realistic*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
Panelist: *Out at CCHM*, Chicago History Museum
Symposium Presenter: *Viral Representations*, University of Chicago, Logan Arts Center
Lecture: *Long Term Survivors*. DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL
Moderator: *Decolonizing arts education/Unsettling the canon*, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Panelist: *Lessons in Activism*, Art, AIDS in America, Alphawood Foundation, Chicago, IL
Panelist: Open Engagement, *Assembling and Reassembling: Decolonizing the (media) archive*, University of Illinois at Chicago
Visiting Faculty: Visit Artist Lecture and Graduate Critiques at Northeastern University
Visiting Faculty: Visiting Artist Lecture and Graduate Critiques at University of Washington, Seattle, WA

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- 2016 Residency: The Atlantic Center of the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, FL
Residency: Latitude, Chicago, IL
Lecture: Public Conversation: Oli Rodriguez, Risa Puleo & Dan Paz, Latitude, Chicago, IL
- 2015 Panelist: *Politics of Visibility*, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Curator: *In a Plain Brown Wrapper*, University of Chicago, Gray Lab Center
Curator: *What Would Barbara Do?* Defibrillator Gallery, Chicago, IL
Residency: Freehold Art Exchange, Catskill, NY
Panelist: *LIT UP*, Pitch Project, Milwaukee, WI
Book Launch: *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Aesthetics*, Latitude, Chicago, IL
- 2014 Residency: Banff Art Centre, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- 2013 Panelist: Trans@SAIC, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Lecture: *Making the 'Other': The Body in Photography, Video and Performance*, Latitude, Chicago, IL
Residency: The Bolt Residency, Chicago Arts Coalition, Chicago, IL
Panelist: Controversy, Community, and Curriculum, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- 2012 Curator: *Deconstructing the Classroom, Reconstructing the Queer*, Roxaboxen Gallery, Chicago, IL
Curator: *The Great Refusal: Videos Taking on New Queer Aesthetics*, Gene Siskel, Chicago, IL
Screening: *For a long time, all I could do was surrender*, Gene Siskel, Chicago IL
Curator: *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Performance*, Defibrillator Gallery, Chicago, IL
Performer: *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Performance*, Defibrillator Gallery, Chicago IL
Curator: *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Aesthetics*, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago IL
Curator: *Videos from the Action Space*, The Nightingale, Chicago IL
Residency: ACRE, Steuben, WI
Publication: *For a long time, all I could do was surrender*, IRL Press
- 2011 Panelist: *Are you Plugged in? Technology's Effect on the Arts*, Urban Gateways, Chicago, IL
Panelist: *Transient*, Cal Arts, Valencia, CA
Curator: *Push and Play*, Nightingale, Chicago, IL
- 2010 Panelist: *Queering the Contemporary Artistic Landscape*, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Curator: *Sex, Power and Labor*, Co-Prosperity Sphere, Chicago, IL
- 2009 Panel: *The Baseball Project*, Vocalo.org, Chicago, IL
- 2008 Guest Lecturer: *Performing the Problematic*, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- 2006 Lecture: *Objectifying the Object: Exploitation, Political, (In)Correctedness and Ethical Dilemmas*, University of Illinois at Chicago, Gallery 400

Press and Publications

- 2019 *Art, AIDS America Chicago* including *The Papi Project*, Alphawood Foundation, University of Washington Press
The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal in *Trans Studies en las Américas*, *Transgender*

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email: oliveriovrodriguez@gmail.com

- Studies Quarterly* (TSQ), Duke University Press, Peer-reviewed journal
The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal, Exhibition Catalogue
The Papi Project, Artist Book, Candor Arts Press (Publication forthcoming Summer 2020)
Performance in *Parole*, featured in Sharon Hayes: Retrospective, Phaidon Press
- 2018 *The Papi Project* in *On the Bus*, Bambaz Press, Los Angeles, CA
- 2017 Review of "One Day This Kid Will Get Larger" including *The Papi Project*, Artforum
The Papi Project in "One Day This Kid Will Get Larger", POZ, article and interview
<https://www.poz.com/article/aids-art-america-youthful-even-joyous-depaul-slideshow>
Let Me Be An Object That Screams, UIC Gallery 400 Press, Chicago IL
Spaces of Solidarity, essay *Spaces of Solidarity: The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal*
MSU Press, Peer-reviewed journal
<http://ojs.msupress.msu.edu/index.php/QED/article/view/351>
The Papi Project at Open Engagement, Review in Newcity
<https://art.newcity.com/2017/04/29/recapping-open-engagement-2017/>
The Papi Project in "One Day This Kid Will Get Larger", *Visual AIDS*,
<https://visualaids.org/blog/in-conversation-danny-orendorff-and-alex-fiorentino-on-one-day-this-kid-wil>
The Papi Project in "One Day This Kid Will Get Larger", Review in Newcity,
<https://art.newcity.com/2017/03/01/>
one-day-this-kid-will-get-larger-at-the-depaul-art-museum/
- 2015 *The Great Refusal: Taking on New Queer Aesthetics*, Artist Book
Confronting the Abject, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago Press
Genderqueer And Trans Artists Breaking Down Barriers In Art, Huffington Post,
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/genderqueer-and-trans-artists_us_564cb45ae4b00b7997f87e3f
Platforms: Ten Years of Chances Dances, Artist Book
The Papi Project, Windy City Times,
<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Transfluent-exhibit-highlights-trans-artists/53380.html>
- 2012 *For a long time, all I could do was surrender*, Emergency Index published by the Bros.
Lumiere for Ugly Duckling Press
Sex, Power and Labor, F-News, Chicago IL

Professional Affiliations

- 2018-20 Secretary of the Queer Caucus of Art, College Art Association (CAA)
2015-19 Co-Chair of the Queer Caucus of Art, College Art Association (CAA)
2008-19 College Art Association (CAA)
2010-15 Society of Photographic Education (SPE)

Awards, Fellowships and Grants

- 2018 Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) grant, Chicago, IL
2014-18 The School of the Art Institute of Chicago Faculty Grant
2006 Diversifying Faculty Initiative Grant (DFI) Recipient, National Grant
2003-05 McNair Scholar Fellowship, National Fellowship

Art Work Acquisitions/Distribution

Oli Rodriguez

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cel: 773.510.3273

website: www.olirodriguez.com

email: oliveriovrodriguez@gmail.com

- 2019 LYNDALÉ, Distribution through Video Date Bank
- 2018 The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal, Eros et Psyché, The Art Institute of Chicago
- 2016 *The Last Seduction/La Seducción Fatal, La Niña Soprendida*, Scott Hunter, The University of Chicago
- 2010 *The Brotherly Love Series*, David Getsy, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Is There a Queer Selfie?

by [Alicia Eler](#) on September 30, 2013



(image by the author for Hyperallergic)

CHICAGO — If the act of allowing someone else to photograph you is read as normative, the selfie in and of itself is a queer act of taking back the gaze. So is there such a thing as a queer selfie, or is the selfie inherently a queer(ed) self-portrait? To clarify, in this case I am not using queer to suggest a non-normative sexual or gender identity; rather, I am referencing the idea of a photograph that engages with power dynamics in relation to the socially networked self. The selfie is a self-reflective act, and in this sense implies a power struggle with the self. This all sounds pretty queer to me.

This week, rather than present you with a stream of five selfies like usual, I shall queer my own series a bit, presenting you with three selfies from a single artist coupled with a performative email exchange with an idea about an erotic selfie that never came to fruition. There is triumph in failure, of failed ideas such as the staged erotic selfie, which will in turn lead to better projects and performances alike. Here I present a queer performative selfie gesture that tests the power relations between writer and artist who both partake in internet-induced power play through the medium of email.

First, I present to you the artist: Oli Rodriguez, an assistant professor in the Photography Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His recent body of work, [The Markings Project](#), considers contemporary fetishism's relationship between pleasure and consumption while concurrently visualizing sadomasochistic culture. As an artist, Rodriguez is always interested in pushing boundaries and pre-defined categories, and his approach to the selfie is no different.

Here are two selfies that he sent me per my original request. Both are performative selfies; this new selfie type positions the selfie as a self-portrait that is directed by the artist, often used on social media sites. "The selfie is a performative action and documentative demand," says Rodriguez of the 'performative selfie.'



Oli Rodriguez with entire apple in his mouth

"I actually use this pic on all social media dating sites," says Rodriguez. "[It is] suggestive of

potential sexual acts. I feel that this was whim, a joke, a delicacy. I can fit an apple in my mouth and more ... Again, as instructed another photographer took the photograph with my instruction. Lower, higher, more straight, get both of my eyes open, less flaring of the nostrils, eyes wider. This selfie was actually taken at least 20 times.”

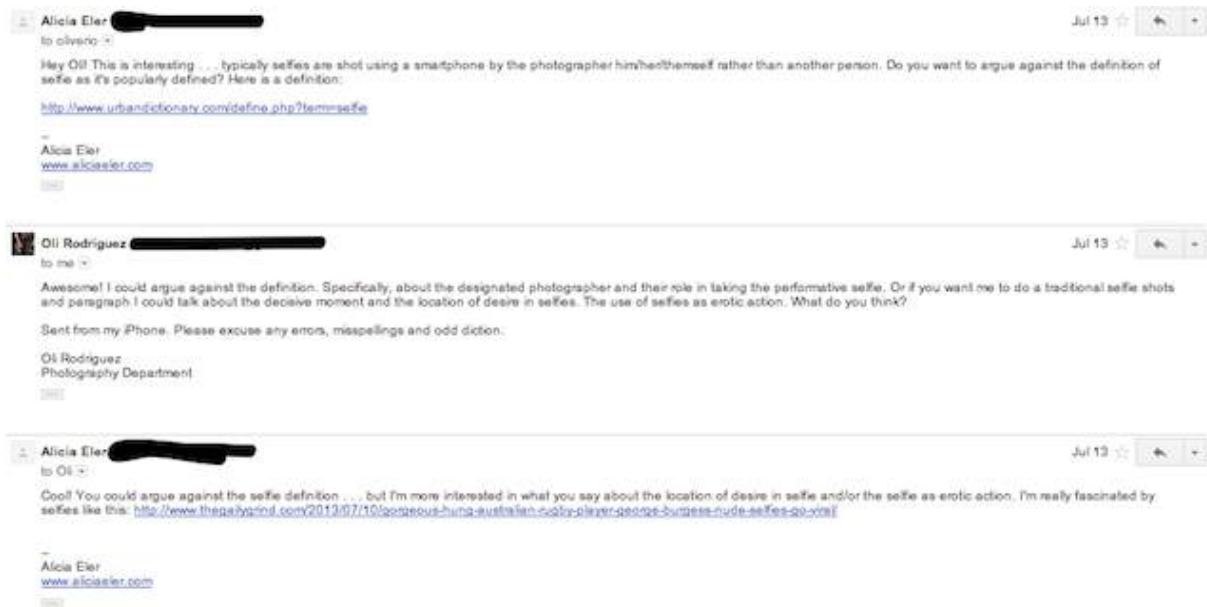


Oli Rodriguez, selfie in a helmet

“I was at [Defibillator Space](#) [a performance art gallery in Chicago] having a meeting with two artists there,” Oli tells me. “One was preparing for their performance the next day. I handed my camera to one of them and instructed to a lo-angle shot as I loomed above him on the pedestal. Given the dramatic, horror film-esque lighting, illuminating from below and the light from behind casting me in silhouette. I contorted my body forward, mimicking a ghoul or monster, grasping my gloves in my hand and using them to mimic a sized extension of fingers from my palm.”

Rodriguez, whose work is in photography and video, had this to say about the performative selfie: “I am inclined in my selfies to designate a photographer to capture the ‘decisive moment,’ as Henri Cartier-Bresson would deem ‘an indistinguishable moment that cannot be found at any other time.’ The selfie is derived in theoretical photographic history. It is completely reliant upon a person situated in the documenter and those that are documented in a partial moment. Cartier-Bresson also states: ‘There is nothing in this world that does not have a decisive moment,’ and ‘to me, photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second.’ This translates well into the momentary realization of the selfie and the moment.”

What ensued after Oli sent me his selfies was a conversation about the making of an erotic queer selfie that would mirror a nude selfie that went viral by Australian rugby player George Burgess. I asked Oli if he would perform this selfie. He responded with thoughts on this performative selfie, inquiring about how desire is located in the selfie, or how the selfie is an erotic action. See our conversation below (reproduced with permission from Oli).



An email exchange with artist Oli Rodriguez about staging the ‘erotic selfie’ based on a nude selfie by rugby player George Burgess that went viral over the summer of 2013.



George Burgess' nude erotic selfies that circulated the web this summer 2013. Sorry, you can't remove the rainbow! (image via TheGailyGrind.com)

Oli never produced the erotic queer selfie, and I didn't follow-up. The act of not producing this erotic selfie is actually more queer — a failure of the selfie and email communication — than a mirrored, queered selfie of the sort Burgess' leaked selfie could have been. Perhaps the queer erotic selfie is one that is not made public, but instead produced for private consumption or for performance in a queer-specific space. After all, Burgess' nude selfie went viral by mistake. How was it leaked? And who was it actually intended for before it ended up on TheGailyGrind.com, among other sites? Try asking Burgess — I doubt he'll tell you.

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I, Selfie is a series of ongoing conversations around people working in the medium of the selfie. The selfie imagemakers are accepting themselves as objects, and reflecting their images back through the smartphone camera lens. They control the images of themselves that float around these murky virtual waters, but they cannot anticipate how these images will be received or perceived by others who exist in the internet void, a space that we pleasurably and both selfishly and selflessly indulge in.

Email Hyperallergic your selfie at [selfies \[at\] hyperallergic.com](mailto:selfies@hyperallergic.com) along with a very brief word explanation of why you shot it and what it means to you.