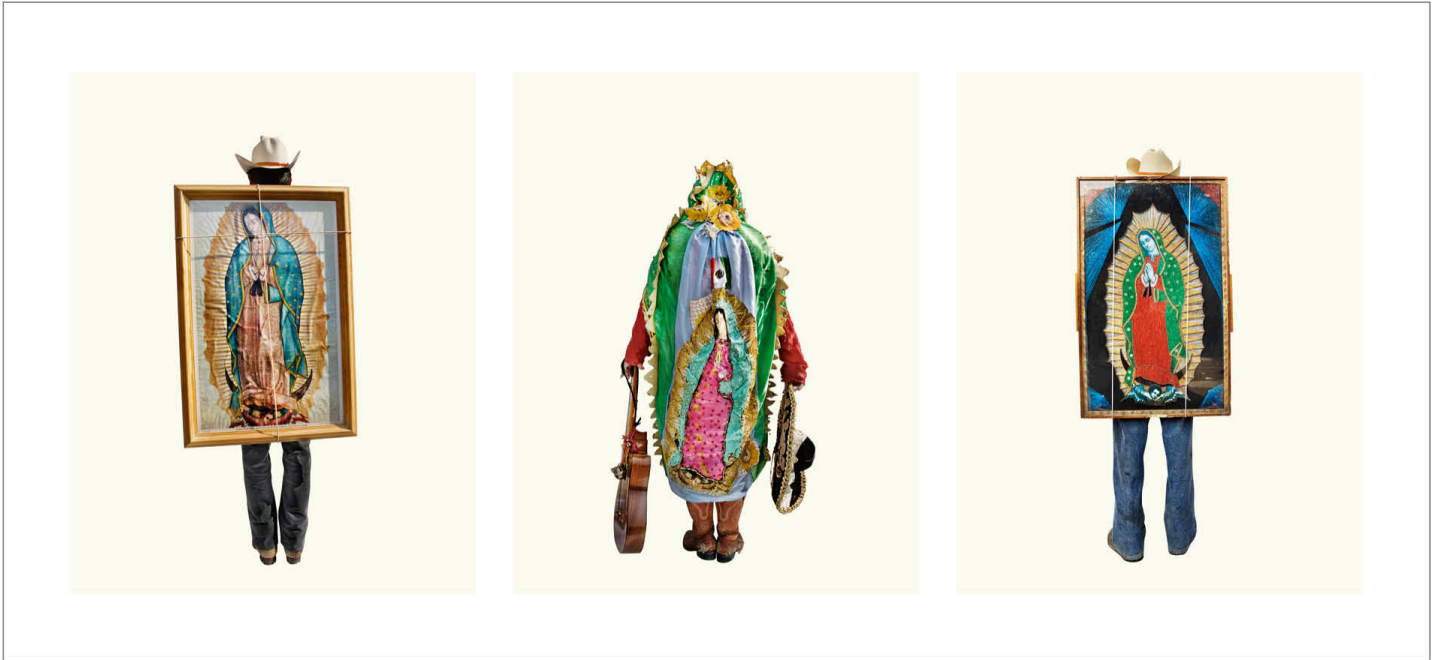


For Immediate Release



UCR ARTSblock presents the exhibition

Alinka Echeverría: Faith and Vision

California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock
November 1, 2014-January 24, 2015
Opening reception with artist talk: Saturday, November 1, 6-9pm

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock presents ***Alinka Echeverría: Faith and Vision***, the artist's first solo museum presentation in the United States. The artist will give a gallery talk at 6:30pm on Saturday, November 1. The exhibition will be accompanied by an academic conference organized by Jennifer Schepher Hughes, Associate Professor of History at UCR, and Jennifer R. Nájera, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at UCR. The conference, "Objects of Devotion/ Objetos de devoción," will be hosted at the Culver Center for the Arts, part of UCR ARTSblock, on December 12 and 13, 2014.

Echeverría's work, which equally engages the histories of fine art and documentary photography, critically investigates the relationship between sight, belief, and knowledge. The exhibition features an immersive installation of over one hundred works from the artist's celebrated series "The Road to Tepeyac" (2010), as well as work from her new project, "Deep Blindness" (2014). In addition, "Small Miracles" (2012) has been re-conceived as an outdoor public art installation, and will be temporarily installed on the Culver "Jumbotron" Screens on the facade of the Barbara and Art Culver Center of the Arts at UCR ARTSblock.

The Road to Tepeyac

In “The Road to Tepeyac,” the artist explores the relationship between an invisible divine presence and its ritualized, material expression. Each year on December 12, as many as eight million faithful from all over Mexico (and beyond), set out on pilgrimage to Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City to honor the Virgin on her feast day. According to centuries of belief, in 1531, her miraculous apparition imprinted itself onto the cloak of the indigenous man Juan Diego. Since then, devout Mexicans have felt privileged to have their land chosen for her manifestation. A symbol of unconditional love and protection, her image has a strong connection to that of the Aztec Goddess Tonantzin. Displaying dozens of varying depictions of the Virgin, Echeverría’s series observes each individual pilgrim on a personal spiritual journey, and probes the philosophical, psychological, and socio-cultural connection between faith and image.

“The Road to Tepeyac” will remain on view in the main gallery through January 24, 2015.

Deep Blindness

The CMP will also debut work from “Deep Blindness,” an ongoing project that questions the liabilities of the gaze through the absence of image. In particular, the artist is interested in the relation between seeing and knowing in the context of an image-centric belief structure. Through de-constructing the act of beholding what the artist refers to as the sacred “image of miracles, and the miracle of image,” Echeverría traces the production, (re-)presentation, and perception of image, and how it is embedded in language and code. Following the investigations of neuroscientist Oliver Sack’s work, in “Deep Blindness,” the Virgin is not visible as an image, but is present in the mind’s eye of the devout believers who go to see her, and encoded in the braille description of her apparition.

While “The Road to Tepeyac” conveys the overwhelming effect of her omnipresent representation, “Deep Blindness” engages the audience in an experience of the opposite. The installation includes a video work, *To see Her, and let Her see me* (2013-14), a sculptural work, *Ixiptla* (2014), and a looped audio recording. Together these works create a contemplative space in which image is absent, a space that leads the viewer to question the role of vision in systems of belief, be they religious or political.

“Deep Blindness” will remain on view on the second floor of the CMP through January 3, 2015.

Small Miracles

The public display of “Small Miracles” on the Culver Screens further probes the philosophical, psychological, and socio-cultural connections between materiality and faith. The series is a typology of contemporary, manufactured votives, *milagritos* or “small miracles,” which are bought by pilgrims, and then bestowed upon the miraculous Virgin of Juquila in Oaxaca. These works offer viewers insight into the prayers and hopes of the faithful for healing, health, love, and safety.

“Small Miracles” will be installed on the Culver Screens through December 20, 2014.

Conference

The exhibition will be accompanied by an academic conference organized by Jennifer Scheper Hughes, Associate Professor of History at UCR, and Jennifer R. Nájera, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at UCR. The conference, “Objects of Devotion/ Objetos de devoción,” will be hosted at the Culver Center for the Arts, part of UCR ARTSblock, on December 12 and 13, 2014.

About the Artist

Alinka Echeverría (born in 1981 in Mexico City) is a Mexican-British artist working primarily in photography and video. She was named “International Photographer of the Year” in 2012 by the Lucie Awards, won the HSBC Prize for Photography in 2011, and has been nominated for the Paul Huf and Prix Pictet Awards. Her work has been widely exhibited internationally, including at Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris (2011), National Portrait Gallery, London (2011), and as part of the Moscow Photobiennale (2012).

She earned her MA in Social Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh in 2004, and studied photography at the International Center of Photography, New York.

www.alinkaecheverria.com

About the Exhibition

Alinka Echeverría: Faith and Vision is organized by the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions, with Jennifer Scheper Hughes, Associate Professor of History at UCR. All works courtesy of the artist and Gazelli Art House, London (www.gazelliarthouse.com). Graphic design by Wendy Brown.

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Visitor Information and Press Inquiries

UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main Steet, Riverside, CA 92501, and includes three venues: the California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery. ARTSBlock is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 pm. Admission is \$3, which includes entry to all three venues. Galleries are open late 6-9pm and admission is free during First Thursday ArtWalks, which take place on the first Thursday of every month. Film screenings are held on Fridays and Saturdays in the Culver Theater. The Culver Center opens 30 minutes prior to film screenings.

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