

A Species Theft

May 27-Aug 06, 2022

Gallery 400, the University of Illinois at Chicago

Exhibition Checklist

Marwa Arsanios

***Who's Afraid of Ideology? Part I*, 2017**

Digital Video, color sound, 18:16 min.

Courtesy the artist and mor Charpentier

Who's Afraid of Ideology? Part I documents the eco-feminist lives of the Kurdish autonomous women's movement in Kurdistan's mountains. The women's oral testimonies detail their means of survival, participation in the guerilla movement, and coexistence with nature and non-human life. The Ottoman Empire's fall during the late nineteenth century and its partition by European powers displaced Kurds across their own land in Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey. For more than forty years, women guerrilla fighters have mobilized gender equality as central to the struggle for an independent Kurdish state.

This work, Arsanios' first installment in a film series exploring global ecofeminist practices, brings to light how these women's ideological stances and ecological consciousness—such as an awareness of how to track a fish's production cycle or when to cut down trees derived from war. Their voices act as part of the film's soundtrack and are isolated from their faces: Arsanios' editing strategy functions to preserve their identities while simultaneously presenting their shared and individual philosophies on self-governance.

Carolina Caycedo

***How to Obtain a British Passport*, 2003**

Color, sound, 16:24 min

Courtesy the artist

The reasons immigrants depart their native land for another range from employment and education to political exile. Acquiring citizenship or residency in their non-native country might be an arduous process that dramatically transforms their identity and civic participation within a nation. British-born artist Carolina Caycedo plays out one form of attaining a British resident visa through a transactional process the setting of which is both real and staged. In exchange for £3,000, Caycedo marries her close friend Javier Mancera, a Colombian immigrant on the verge of getting his student visa revoked. Caycedo and

Mancera's humorous storytelling of their marriage characterizes the social, economic, and cultural shifts that arise from migration and owing allegiance to another country.

Skawennati

The Peacemaker Returns, 2017

HD video, sound, 18:38 min.

Courtesy the artist

Virtual worlds enable us to see beyond the past, present, and future. With *The Peacemaker Returns*, Skawennati deploys machinima—an animation technique that uses 3D game engines to produce linear video narratives in virtual worlds—as a means to preserve indigenous oral histories while imagining a future informed by them. Set in 3025, *The Peacemaker Returns* depicts a diplomatic intergalactic mission led by lotetshèn:'en, a young Mohawk woman whose divine gift to vividly see the past enables her to witness the formation of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy by Tekanawí:ta. Known as the Great Peacemaker, Tekanawí:ta united the Mohawk, Cayuga Oneida, Seneca, and Onondaga nations at some point between the 14th and 16th centuries, a period marked by war between neighboring nations. Skawennati further animates lotetshèn:'en's odyssey by including encounters with contemporary and historical figures such as Jacques Cartier, a French navigator whose mapping of what is now called the Gulf of St. Lawrence led to the area's colonization by France.

Tomashi Jackson

The High Yellow Pavilion for Renisha McBride Suite 1: Pavane for a Dead Princess (Between the homes of Monica & Theodore) (Red Topeka, Kansas)

2015

Video collage with sound, 9:13 min.

Courtesy Tilton gallery

In the early morning hours of November 2, 2013, Renisha McBride, a nineteen-year-old African American woman, crashed her car in the suburban neighborhood of Dearborn Heights, Michigan. McBride sought help and approached Theodore Paul Wafer's porch where he shot her through a screen door. Wafer argued he acted in self-defense and was convicted of second-degree murder. Tomashi Jackson laments the death of Renisha McBride and reflects on how intertwined protection of property and racialized violence are by way of co-opting Maurice Ravel's nostalgic score titled Pavane for a Dead Princess. Ravel defended his composition as "not a funeral lament for a dead child, but rather an evocation of the pavane [a 16th-century Spanish court dance] which could have been danced by such a little princess as painted by [Diego] Velázquez." An artist invested in

marginalized communities' relationships to land, Jackson re-interprets the score into an elegy that memorializes McBride.