

NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021

nightgallery.ca

FARLEY AGUILAR

Phantom Limb

April 2 – May 7, 2022

Night Gallery is pleased to announce *Phantom Limb*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Farley Aguilar. This is the artist's debut presentation with the gallery, and his first solo show in Los Angeles.

Phantom Limb investigates the furtive contradictions of the United States in the late 1950s and mid 60s—an era associated with economic prosperity and a rise to international power, yet marred by de jure and de facto racism. The artist's new paintings put forth a holistic consideration of the material, social, and political conditions of the period. Evocative and haunting, the works on view are unified in scale and perspective, thus equalizing the visual plane and providing a commentary on the linear rhetoric of American progressivism. Aguilar's aim is not to simply represent past occurrences, but to use the painted form to illuminate the mundane features of the collective environment in which historical narrative is formed. Within this mundanity, we find an impetus to reconsider the relation between past and present.

Aguilar's tableaux begin with found photographs, grounding each work in the lived realities of the archive. Rather than working from iconic images, Aguilar looks to subjects and scenes on the periphery of a given historical event: crowds on a funeral route look on with profound yet mismatched affect; Eisenhower is depicted playing golf as a group of journalists follow his ball with their gaze, transfixed—the same year Autherine Lucy, the first Black student to take classes at the University of Alabama, is attacked on campus and expelled.

The artist employs a breadth of application techniques, melding oil paint with frenetic gestures in graphite. With a highly saturated palette, Aguilar captures the interiority of his subjects with such depth it borders on the uncanny: in *The Chorus*, harsh strokes of red create shadows under a woman's eyes and around her mouth, which is open in haunting midspeech. A green-tinted boy claps, looking at the viewer with a somber incredulosity. The figures, limned in chroma, evoke the sheer breadth of personal experience in a singular society: hopefulness, despondency, camaraderie, detachment, stoicism. *Phantom Limb* is an encounter with American subjectivity, as the tensions of a nation are distilled within the psyche of the individual.

Farley Aguilar (b. 1980, Managua, Nicaragua) has presented solo exhibitions at SPURS Gallery, Beijing; Lyles & King, New York; Edel Assanti, London; and Spinello Gallery, Miami. He has been featured in group shows at several galleries and institutions, including Opalka Gallery, Albany; Kunstraum Potsdam; Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke; Albertz Benda, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, FL. Aguilar's work belongs in the permanent collections of Pérez Art Museum Miami, FL; Bass Museum of Art, Miami; Aurora Museum, Shanghai; Yuz Museum, Shanghai; Akron Art Museum, OH; David Winton Bell Gallery Collection, Brown University, Providence; and Orlando Museum of Art, FL. Aguilar lives and works in Miami.