

ALTMAN SIEGEL

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Rafael Delacruz

Montage

April 24 – May 31, 2025

Altman Siegel is thrilled to present our inaugural exhibition with California-based artist Rafael Delacruz. Delacruz seamlessly blurs the lines between time-based works and painting in this exhibition. In addition to a new suite of works on canvas, the artist will premiere a 3D video sculpture titled: *A Picture: Me in the air, next to that thing*, 2024 - 2025. Both paintings and film are equally mysterious, playful, textured, and undeniably innovative—a strong relationship to collage, montage, and the act of drawing weaves both mediums together.

In Delacruz's paintings, narrative explodes and collapses, tempered by the intentionality of his mark-making and vivid blocks of bold color. Handmade pigment from sacramental palm ash provides shades of grey and black throughout these compositions. Techniques ranging from linocut and screen printing in tandem with traditional oil painting manifest in a diverse crust over the surface of these pieces. Primarily working with exteriors and street scenes, this two-dimensional work flattens architectural space to betray our notions of depth and upend typical comprehension of perspective. The head must crane sideways to grasp these constructions that appear to slide at an angle off the canvas. Gazing into these works, the viewer's perception of space is warped and distorted to dizzying effect. Episodic vignettes reminiscent of in-camera film editing and personally significant symbology drift through and saturate these paintings with ease. Cars, bicycles, clouds, and calendars shift in and out of focus as our eyes attempt to navigate the illusive landscape of these pictures.

Similarly, Delacruz's 3D film, which requires the adornment of special glasses to view, contorts and disrupts our notions of space, immersing the viewer in a fully enhanced artist-made environment. Here, ethereal hand-held footage of two Bay Area cyclists is interspersed with CGI and animated ink drawings that seem to be executed in real time by the artist. These moments, projected in 3D, call forth *Le Mystère Picasso* (1955), in which French director Henri-Georges Clouzot used stop-action and time-lapse photography to capture Picasso at work. Fragmentary and sensorial films, specifically *Goodbye to Language* (Jean Luc Godard, 2014) and *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962), as well as the work of film theorist Nicole Brenez and cinematographer Fabrice Arago, have been critical to the artist's conception of this project.

In both Delacruz's paintings and video, the impact of Brenez's texts on plasticity and figural analysis in cinema is evident. Bodies morph into unfamiliar formal elements according to the artist's unconventional interior logic. Figures are redefined and distilled from individual characters to motifs, energetic shapes, and so on. Delacruz consistently manipulates iconoclastic forms, stretching them to the limit of legibility to create wholly original, atmospheric environments through paint.

Follow this [link](#) to access alternative texts written by Akiko Neumann.

Delacruz's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Cushion Works, San Francisco, CA; Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, NY; and Reyes| Finn, Detroit, MI. Group exhibitions include Greene Naftali, New York, NY; Taka Ishii, Tokyo, Japan; Altman Siegel, San Francisco, CA; Ratio 3, San Francisco, CA; and Pilar Corrias, London, UK, among others.

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