

JointCustody

Natalia Lassalle-Morillo / Lacey Lennon

Curated by Amanda Nudelman

January 16 - March 23, 2024

Opening Reception: January 16, 5 - 8pm

/ (Slash) 1150 25th St, Building B, San Francisco
Open Thursday - Saturday, 11am - 6pm



Lacey Lennon, *Sudden and noiseless*, 2022, Archival Pigment Print, 7.25 x 9.66 inches

*Why did I never see it for what it was:
abundance. Two families, two different
kitchen tables, two sets of rules, two
creeks, two highways, two stepparents
with their fish tanks or eight tracks or
cigarette smoke or expertise in recipes or
reading skills. I cannot reverse it, the record
scratched and stopping to that original
chaotic track. But let me say, I was taken
back and forth on Sundays and it was not easy
but I was loved each place. And so I have two
brains now. Two entirely different brains.
The one that always misses where I'm not,
the one that is so relieved to finally be home.
—Ada Limón, *Joint Custody**

Joint Custody features works by artists Natalia Lassalle-Morillo and Lacey Lennon that center frameworks of performance as tools to (re)examine personal histories. Scripts are saved things: memories revisited as dialogue, setting, and action. The dynamic between actor, director, and camera is a mechanism for negotiating the entangled relationships of

daughters and mothers, the tension between our interior emotions and the selves we perform in public. Each take is a conversation that allows the scene to unfold differently. A reciprocal opportunity to rewrite a narrative that once felt fixed or to reveal latent ones.

Natalia Lassalle-Morillo's three-channel video installation *Retiro* (2019) is a collaborative project produced with her mother, Gloria, born from a mutual desire to understand the other better. Motivated in part by their shared grief over the death of Gloria's mother (Natalia's grandmother), the film-within-a-film nests a reconstruction of a transcendental moment from Gloria's life—for which Natalia inverts the traditional director/subject relationship by handing over total dramaturgical authorship to Gloria, who casts the artist to perform as Gloria's younger self—within a broader documentary narrative composed from behind-the-scenes footage and interviews directed by Natalia. Over the course of five years, mother and daughter meet each other again and again to craft an intimate film that explores memory, matrilineal inheritance, aging, and the coexistence of many possible realities.

Lacey Lennon's series of photographs are sometimes documentary in approach, but mostly are based on short plotless plays and premises she writes about moments of everyday reckoning with grief, love, and family. She invites performers—actors, athletes, dancers, and friends—to interpret the prompt. Rehearsals might take weeks, the shoot a couple of days, during which Lennon allows her subjects to improvise as they bring their full messy selves to bear on their embodiment of the stories. The photographs remain as traces of the original encounter; a stilled visual rhyme of the performance that renders the complexity of emotional, physical, and psychic communication through gesture, expression, and tone.

Lassalle-Morillo's and Lennon's practices probe the ability of film and photography to capture multiple simultaneous perspectives of a single moment by blurring the boundaries of documentary, documentation, and performance. Their works operate at the seams of fiction and reality, where stories slip between the gaps in images and invite us to discover a world beyond the frame through the experiences of others.

- Amanda Nudelman

Joint Custody, curated by Amanda Nudelman, is the eleventh in a series of exhibitions in the main gallery at / (Slash), each organized by an independent Bay Area-based curator. Please join us for a walkthrough of the exhibition with Nudelman at 5pm on January 16, 2024.

Natalia Lassalle-Morillo develops film, installation, and theatre-based projects that reconstruct history and memory through a transdisciplinary and collaborative approach. Merging theatrical performance, experimental ethnography, and collaborations with non-professional performers, her work focuses on the excavation of history both imagined and documented,

decentralizing canonical narratives, and revising history through re-enactments and the creation of new mythologies. Her work has been presented at Amant Foundation, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico, the Smithsonian, among many other venues internationally. She was a Smithsonian Artist Fellow and was recently awarded the Princeton/CENTRO Bridging the Divides Fellowship. She developed her practice nomadically, but is currently based in San Juan.

Lacey Lennon (b.1988, Montclair, New Jersey) is an artist working in photography, performance, and video. Lennon has exhibited her work at the Brown Fine Arts Center Oresman Gallery, Smith College, Northampton, MA, Webber gallery, Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, among others. Her work has been featured in publications such as Artforum, LA Times Image, and Frieze magazine. Lennon holds an MFA from the Yale School of Art Photography program, where she was awarded the H. Lee Hirsche Prize, the Alice Kimball English Fellowship, and the A-Z West Residency. She is Assistant Professor of Photography at California State University, Long Beach, and a Critic in the Graduate Photography program at the Yale School of Art. Lennon lives and works in Los Angeles and Oakland, California

Amanda Nudelman is a curator and writer based in the Bay Area. She was the closing Exhibitions and Public Programs Curator at McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, and previously held positions at KADIST, San Francisco and UNTITLED, ART. She has curated exhibitions and programs at the Wattis Institute (San Francisco), e-flux (New York), Royal Nonesuch Gallery (Oakland), swissnex (San Francisco), and Headlands Center for the Arts (Marin). Her writing has appeared in *Creative Villages Journal*, *CSPA Quarterly*, and *Blackout Magazine*. She holds a Master of Arts in Curatorial Practice from California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

/ **(Slash)** is a nonprofit visual art space founded in 2018 to advance and promote the expanding field of contemporary art in San Francisco through exhibitions, publications, and public programming.