

# Gender & Mutant Salon

YOUNG  
JOON  
KWAK

MUTANT  
SALON

GENDERNOXS

YOUNG JOON KWAK & MUTANT SALON

LACE (LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS)

**LACE** Los Angeles  
Contemporary  
Exhibitions

# CAVERNOUS

**Young Joon Kwak  
& Mutant Salon**



This book is published as a reflection of the Summer Residency 2018  
**CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak & Mutant Salon**  
 curated by Daniela Lieja Quintanar.  
 July 12–August 26, 2018

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# FORWARD

LACE's Summer Residency exhibition provides an annual opportunity for a Los Angeles-based artist to produce their most ambitious solo exhibition to-date in our main gallery. Each year, LACE's Chief Curator and Director of Programming Daniela Lieja Quintanar conducts numerous studio visits across the city to find an artist ready and eager for this undertaking. Past Summer Residents include *Native Strategies* (2014), *rafa esparza* (2015), and *Jibade-Khalil Huffman* (2016), curated by former Assistant Director Shoghig Halajian. More recently, Lieja Quintanar organized residencies with Jimena Sarno (2017), Young Joon Kwak and *Mutant Salon* (2018), and Sandra de la Loza (2019). In 2018, Young Joon Kwak and *Mutant Salon*, an artist collective Kwak founded as an MFA student at the University of Southern California (USC), presented *CAVERNOUS*. The LACE team fully submitted the gallery to Kwak and the members of *Mutant Salon* to use as they saw fit.

As with every LACE Summer Residency, *CAVERNOUS* presented newly commissioned work to the public. For the month leading up to the exhibition, our main gallery became a collaborative studio space for 17 artists. The result was a maddening and jubilant presentation that included a public programming series of talks, performances, workshops, and a music video production. Check the LACE website for Xina Xurner and San Cha's song "Inténtame" and see our gallery turn into a caged disco fantasy.

Not only does this residency contribute to LACE's history of ambitious commissions, *CAVERNOUS* also joins the legacy of LACE's ongoing history of platforming LGBTQAI+ artists. One would be hard-pressed to find a year in LACE's history without queer representation. Just some exhibitions from our 40 years include: *Against Nature: A Group Show of Work by Homosexual Men* (1988), *All but the Obvious: A Program of Lesbian Art* (1990), *Sweet Oleander* (1991), and *Against the Grain* (2008). Performances by queer artists include seminal works by ASCO, Cassils, Roberto Gil de Montes, Dorian Wood, Dino Dinco, Ron Athey, Jerri Allyn, Sheree Rose, Bob Flanagan, and so many more. At the raucous opening reception for *CAVERNOUS*, numerous friends and colleagues remarked: "This is just like old LACE!" This exhibition is "old LACE." It is new LACE. It is LACE always.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the funders who supported this exhibition from its inception. Thank you to the Angeles Art Fund, the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Grants Program, the California Arts Council, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Special thanks to our programming partners including Black TED, *Dirty Looks: On Location, My Friend's Place*, the ONE Archives at USC Libraries, and the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

*Mutant Salon's* collective practice represents a truly intersectional queer future—one we can see right in front of us. This is a future we believe in. This is the future we want to see thrive.

Executive Director  
**Sarah Russin**

Former Assistant Director  
**Fiona Ball**

# CAVERNOUS

**Young Joon Kwak  
& Mutant Salon**

**July 12–August 26, 2018**

Curated by  
**Daniela Lieja Quintanar**

Mutant Salon:

**Young Joon Kwak, Marvin Astorga, Jacinto Astiazarán, Dove Ayinde, Corazon Del Sol, Sarah Gail, Juan Manuel Gudiño, laub, Long Long (Thinh Nguyen), Alli Miller, Roxy Morataya, Anna Luisa Petrisko, Project Rage Queen (Alice Cunt, Dalton Chase Goulette, and Travis D), Matt Savitsky and Kim Ye.**

**Opening Reception July 11, 2018 at 7pm**

Durational performances by  
**Project Rage Queen and Matt Savitsky**

JEEP JEEP video game presented by  
**Anna Luisa Petrisko, Tonia Beglari (Browntourage),  
Bela Messex (Buddy System), and David Lyons (WITHIN)**

An interactive guided tour explaining  
the “oral” history of the works on display given by  
**Long Long and Alli Miller.**

Tours begin at 7:30pm, 8:30pm, and 9:30pm.

**LACE's** Summer Residency presents CAVERNOUS by artist Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon, a collective of queer-trans-femme-POC artists and performers. As a platform for community collaborations, CAVERNOUS is a kaleidoscopic environment that queers the last bastion of manhood in the domestic space—the man cave. CAVERNOUS fractures the patriarchal myth of male privilege, provides an access point for an ongoing critical deconstruction of how we view our bodies, and reimagines alternative forms of existence and desire.

Welcoming viewers at the entrance of CAVERNOUS, Young Joon Kwak presents new sculptures and a living queer archive that reclaims erased narratives and traces a lineage of radical present-future queer arts communities in Los Angeles. Kwak's archive features a selection of unclassified objects by unknown artists from the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, as well as custom wigs by stylists from historic Hollywood retailers displayed on ceramic wig stands designed by Kwak as a tribute to the artistry of these under-recognized wig stylists. The archive also includes a screening of video works and documentation by historically radical local performance artist Johanna Went, connecting the community of Mutant Salon with LACE's 40 year history of supporting queer and feminist performance art.

Deeper in CAVERNOUS, Mutant Salon creates a temporary autonomous zone that fosters community-building and celebrates the bonds of critical resistance and togetherness in the act of self-care. Mutant Salon features sculptures, videos, interactive installations, lounging spaces, a zine library, a spring, and other surprises, which will transform throughout the duration of the exhibition. The opening of CAVERNOUS will feature several spectacular performances by members of Mutant Salon.

The LACE Summer Residency program has a commitment to reconnect with Hollywood surrounding communities. For this summer 2018 at CAVERNOUS, members of Mutant Salon host a workshop of radical writing and zine production for the youth community of My Friend's Place. Programming also includes activities for the senior community at the Los Angeles LGBT Center, with a conversation on Oral Histories of Queer Resistance presented in collaboration with Dirty Looks: On Location.

With their outdoor neon signage, Mutant Salon designated LACE as femme, trans, gender non-binary, and inclusive. All gender expressions are welcome.



Young Joon Kwak and Alice Cunt, 2016. Photo by Logan White.



## QUEER COMMUNAL ALCHEMY

by Marvin Astorga and Young Joon Kwak

Mutant Salon came to be through our electronic dance-noise-diva band Xina Xurner. When we started playing Xina Xurner's shows in Los Angeles, after moving here so Young Joon could attend grad school at USC in 2012, we found acceptance, solidarity, and friendship in an interconnected network of underground world-making communities/collectives/parties centered around decolonial, queer, feminist, punk resistance and expression—including Cool World, Club sCum, Black TED, and Project Rage Queen to name a few. At these parties, we witnessed performances at so-called non-art venues<sup>2</sup> that blew our minds with their unencumbered vitality and made us wonder—why isn't this in an art gallery???

At the time, Young Joon needed to make their art studio into a dressing room because they didn't feel safe to get dressed and made up at their apartment in their neighborhood. Thus Mutant Salon was born. We'd throw art show parties in Young's studio or in the gallery and kitchen in the grad building, where members of our community could show their art, get made up, receive free haircuts<sup>3</sup> and makeovers, and celebrate an ethos of inclusivity, generosity and self-care. Young Joon had the privilege of having the space and platform that comes with institutional support, and they wanted to extend this space into our community and to collaborate with them [Mutant Salon]. The act of making oneself over became a collective process, a collective makeover—an act of world-making.

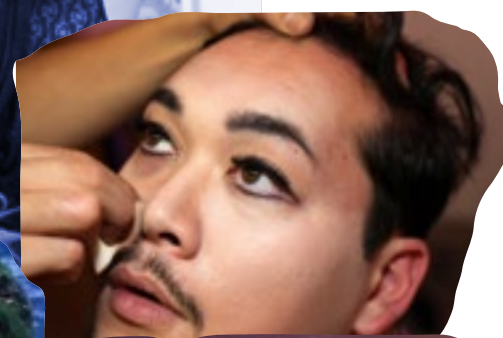
<sup>1</sup> We started Xina Xurner in 2011 in Chicago in order to create music and live performances that embody our desire for transformation and catharsis of trauma, rage, pain, joy, humor and twisted empowerment found in embracing the "other" identity which we were forced into as queer trans femme POC. Live performances allow us to mourn and heal publicly, through and with a community in underground art and music scenes rather than giving in to the impulse to experience these feelings in isolation.

<sup>2</sup> Traditionally, night-life-oriented venues and parties that make art more approachable and accessible to marginalized communities have, unsurprisingly, been overlooked or alienated by the larger art world. In contrast to typical art galleries, the artists creating and performing their art at these alternative spaces are regarded by their audiences as vital and directly address the issues that matter deeply to the communities that attend these venues.

<sup>3</sup> Marvin was something like the local barber for our community of artists, musicians, punks in Chicago.



Soon thereafter we began to host Mutant Salons at other art spaces and institutions, working with others in the art world that were willing to explore alternative means of support and collaboration with subcultural communities of resistance, in spite of the hierarchical and capitalist logic endemic to the art world (wherein art galleries and institutions are structured to exist and succeed in a capitalist system that maintains domination over historically overlooked and marginalized groups of people). Our organizational/institutional partners were willing to take the deep dive into the messy unknown, an alchemical cauldron where traditional and vertical roles of institution, curator, art workers, artists and public blur and blend, becoming inextricably collaborative and imaginative. In these scenarios, unexpected challenges arise, and the players must contend with the complicated and interwoven desires of a diverse community, having faith that the thing (or non-thing) that emerges from this transformational stew couldn't have been anticipated or resulted in any other way. Thanks to our wonderful curator/collaborator Daniela, Sarah, Andrew, and the rest of the team at LACE, this alchemical, intersectional magic that happened at LACE during our residency.



Left to right:  
Young Joon Kwak, *Musical Beauty Instruments*, 2016;  
Kelly Akashi and Marvin Astorga, 2012; Mutant Salon: Beautython 3 flyer, 2012; Young Joon Kwak and Barbara T. Smith at the Hammer Museum, 2017. Photo by Christopher Richmond; Alice Cunt at the Hammer Museum, 2017. Photo by Justin Sullivan; Photo by Barak Zemer. Sarah Gail, Young Joon Kwak, and Dove Ayinde at Human Resources Los Angeles, 2019. Becket MWN, 2013. TravisD at the Broad Museum, 2016.



In Mutant Salon, we relearn how to see each other as objects of profound beauty.



In Mutant Salon, there isn't a simple, singular aesthetic or polemic, because we all come from different backgrounds, perspectives, disciplines, formal training, and interests. In its ecstatic multitudinous excess, the collective production of Mutant Salon disidentifies from the oversimplified, shallow, and hollow representations of queer/trans/POC/womxn bodies that we ourselves are expected to perform and recapitulate. We use a multiplicity of mediums, frames, spaces, and physical and ideological elements to stage an affective encounter of anti-normative, disruptive, wanting-to-imagine-a-different-world queerness. We are united by our desire to imagine different bodies, worlds, and futures that counteract the violent, harmful, and dehumanizing effects of the objectification, surveillance, and policing of our bodies by a cis-hetero-white-supremacist-capitalist patriarchy. Mutant Salon is a queer time and space in which the objectification script is flipped through what Gordon Hall calls "reparative objectification", in which we mutually objectify each other in ways that allow us to recuperate our historically pained relationship to being objectified. In Mutant Salon, we relearn how to see each other as objects of profound beauty. We show our bodies without shame and feel valued and respected for who we are. Though our bodies may be covered in trash and look monstrous they are still beautiful, because we make each other beautiful.



Left to right:  
Young Joon Kwak and TravisD performing at the Broad Museum, 2016. Photo by Dicko Chan.  
Vik Victorious and Iliia Anxelin Eleuia Xochipilli performing at the Broad Museum, 2016. Photo by Dicko Chan.  
Young Joon Kwak getting ready at Southern Exposure, San Francisco.





## YOUNG JOON KWAK & MUTANT SALON: CAVERNOUS

by Anuradha Vikram

In Plato's "Allegory of the Cave," humankind is challenged to emerge from the deprivations and impressions of our limited perception – "the cave" – into the rational light of knowledge that casts relations between people and objects as hard and fast reality. What if, instead, we were to liberate the cave, bringing the illusions and misperceptions imagined in darkness into real, if temporary life? This act of creation would be anathema to the rational order, which dictates externally imposed definitions and limitations. To raise such monsters would be the work of a modern Prometheus – the creator of Man, in defiance of the gods, whose punishment for his hubris is eternal.

For CAVERNOUS, Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon transformed LACE into a haven for irrational creatures. Outside on Hollywood Boulevard, where the masses come to pay homage to the rich and famous whose stars adorn the sidewalk, Kwak signals to the misfits in a looping neon script above the gallery door. SHE/HER/THEY/THEM (*Preferred Pronouns*, 2018). Us. *Come in*, the sign beckons. *This space is yours*. Entering the long, voluminous space of the gallery, a variety of experiences are discovered. To the right, a set of platforms arranged in a multi-level architecture (*Dante's Crawlspace*, 2018) by artist Jacinto Astiazarán, is covered in beaded chains and carpet – inviting go-go dancing for the extrovert, cat-napping for the introvert. To the left, another carpeted structure, this one with a chain-link cylinder set atop, like a human-shaped hamster wheel. An exploded disco ball descends from above, enhancing the sense that nightclubbing has metastasized in the space. Overhead, *Ceiling Vaginis Light Drip* (2018) is a colorful mass of el-wire that descends from the oculus of LACE's interior. Within its glow, we embrace the sensual, expressive, and feminine.



Left to right: Installation view of CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak & Mutant Salon. Photo by Christopher Wormald. Young Joon Kwak, *Hermaphroditus's Reveal III* (2018). Photo by Christopher Wormald. Young Joon Kwak's *Vaginis Chair* (2018), *Inverted Vaginis Masturbators* (2018) and *Vaginis Lamp* (2018). Photo by Christopher Wormald.

The gallery at LACE is roughly divided into sections, with Kwak's clean and formalist presentation toward the front drawing a contrast with Mutant Salon's all-over aesthetic in the back. Kwak's section includes her biomorphic sculpture, *Hermaphroditus' Reveal III*, (2018), a fiberglass-and-resin, undulating plane adorned with feet and ambiguous genitals. Objects from her "Living Queer Archive" are drawn from collaborations with other artists, laub and Johanna Went, and echo the forms of phalluses in vitrines, from the collection of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives. A connection made through LACE's community outreach network brought Kwak into contact with wig stylist Rosario Ribera, who worked at nearby Hollywood Wigs until the business closed in November 2018. Each of the three wigs she has contributed – a black flip, a purple shag, and a brunette beehive with a bumblebee yellow "Bride of Frankenstein" streak – sits atop a ceramic sculptural mount hand-built by Kwak.

In the lexicon of gender theorist Paul B. Preciado, "dildotectonics" is the object-manifestation of "counter-sexual" imperatives that aim to liberate sexuality from socially imposed hierarchies of domination. By this logic, all things that function ontologically as surrogates for other things are by extension dildos. Preciado suggests, "we could assert that a museum of artistic replicas would have a dildological statute in relation to the production of the artwork in the era of mechanical reproduction."<sup>1</sup> The body is an erogenous zone in Preciado's terms, one that has been artificially restricted into prescribed zones and roles that preclude healthy sexual interaction. Kwak's collections and objects function dildonically, as remnants of a culture of sexual liberation that reflects queer historical perspectives, as in the large convex mirror on one wall.

1 Preciado, Paul B., translated by Kevin Gerry Dunn, *Countersexual Manifesto*. Columbia University Press, 2018. P. 52



The production of life is a womanly enterprise, and CAVERNOUS explores the multitude of ways that women birth one another, vaginally or otherwise. Kwak is in dialogue with the performance artist Johanna Went, whose visceral, prop-laden musical performances defined the post-punk aesthetic of the early 1980s. Went has contributed video works and documentation of her early performances to CAVERNOUS, which play on a screen suspended high at the center of the gallery. This location marks the passage between the solo and collaborative sections of CAVERNOUS, acknowledging the debt that live art of the present owes to Went's 40-year practice.

Went's early works proffered monstrous apparitions and blood-spattered scenarios that wavered between comedic and occult modes of spectacle. Invocation of the monstrous is her signature, as articulated by performance scholar Meiling Cheng, who writes: Like [Alfred] Jarry, Went shows no hesitation to embrace those who are typically seen as 'abnormal,' 'strange,' 'revolting,' 'filthy,' 'freakish,' or 'unsavory.' She surrenders her stage for their habitation, turning monstrosity into her standard of beauty.<sup>2</sup> Cheng credits Went's manipulation of costumes and props with the sense of the uncanny that her performances create, but it is equally possible that her expression of fully self-deterministic female embodiment, disassociated from the expectation of pleasing others, is already beyond the scope of what the "human" is constructed to allow. Went says, "Also, a certain amount of it has to do with the fact that I'm a woman doing what I do, too. And I think that more and more, younger women performers are getting tougher and tougher, they're getting more to the point where they want to do whatever it is that they want to do. They're getting stronger, which I really like. They're sick of what they're all supposed to pretend; that's part of it."<sup>3</sup> Went in the 1970s and '80s was a performance artist who favored popular spaces, mounting performances in the street and in punk clubs, without the reifying distance that presentations branded "art" tend to create, the veneer of "what they're all supposed to pretend." Leaving little by way of document or material remnant, Went's performance legacy is maintained not through the archive, but through the intergenerational transmission of her ideas. Within LACE, which for 40 years has maintained a haven for live art in the midst of their exhibitions, Kwak and Mutant Salon have emulated Went's immediacy in performances which occupied and activated the rear half of the gallery throughout the run of CAVERNOUS.

<sup>2</sup> Cheng, Meiling. In *Other Los Angeleses: Multicentric Performance Art*. University of California Press, 2002. P. 292

<sup>3</sup> V. Vale, "Johanna Went." *RE/Search Issue 6/7: Industrial Culture Handbook*. RE/Search Publications, San Francisco, 1983. P. 126.

The artists are both Frankenstein and his monster: the makers and the subjects of the making and un-making.



Installation views of CAVERNOUS. Photos by Christopher Wormald.

Went often works with collaborators, and so too Young Joon Kwak, whose Mutant Salon at LACE involved members Marvin Astorga, Jacinto Astiazarán, Dove Ayinde, Corazon Del Sol, Sarah Gail, Juan Manuel Gudiño, laub, Long Long (Thin Nguyen), Alli Miller, Roxy Morataya, Anna Luisa Petrisko, Project Rage Queen (Alice Cunt, Dalton Chase Goulette, and TravisD), Matt Savitsky, and Kim Ye, with additional artists collaborating on closing event performances. Using post-industrial remnants as material, Mutant Salon invites the offspring of a monstrous present to imagine new futures, willing them into momentary beings through collective acts of creation. The artists are both Frankenstein and his monster: the makers and the subjects of the making and un-making. Unlike the monster, Mutant Salon is empowered with the capacity to recreate participants' own lives afresh from the debris of a violent, disassociative society. A biomorphic manicure station, a blanket fort, and a video game play station with bean bag chairs invited loitering, socializing, and self-care, in contrast to the sterile environments typical of much contemporary gallery art. Massive wigs, suspended, a full-body plaster cast, pumps embedded in concrete blocks, and exercise machines with foreboding dentata suggest that self-creation comes at a price, and is not for the weak or the faint of heart.

The exhibition at LACE included programs directed at communities of need within the surrounding Hollywood area, including youth writing and publishing workshops at My Friend's Place, and activities and dialogues organized with the community around the Los Angeles LGBT Center with a focus on recognizing seniors as living carriers of queer history, organized with Dirty Looks: On Location. These engagement programs complement the radical hospitality that animates Mutant Salon and permeates CAVERNOUS, in which belief, community, and self-invention converge to empower total, if temporary, liberation.



Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the first literary work of modern science fiction, celebrated its bicentennial in 2018. The Mutant Salon harkens back to Shelley's often forgotten feminist underpinnings, who used the romantic novel as a form to transmit a dissertation on the limitations of "human" ontology as applied to anyone outside the Enlightenment ideal of a cisgendered, patriarchal white Euro-American man. At its essence, *Frankenstein* is a story about authoritarian parents and the children they reject. At the book's denouement, Victor Frankenstein – the Enlightenment ideal, the purely rational scientist – becomes terrified not by his own capacity to create life seemingly without concern for its viability or sociability, as Victorian men including Shelley's compatriot Lord Byron were prone to do, but by the possibility that the new life forms he creates could soon begin to procreate themselves, without his intervention. Unable to allow for this possibility, he destroys his near-complete second creation, scattering her parts in the ocean in a scene reminiscent of the Egyptian myth of Osiris, who is murdered by his brother Set, and later dismembered and his body parts scattered so as to prevent his resurrection.<sup>4</sup> Like Set, Victor Frankenstein must maintain procreative power at all costs, rather destroying his creations than allowing them to live independently of his power and domination. He must preserve the Platonic authority to separate, designate, and classify, against the potential for mutation. The posthuman feminine is the ultimate affront to this authority, and thereby triggers the most violent response.

4 Mark, Joshua J. "Osiris." Ancient History Encyclopedia, March 6, 2016. <https://www.ancient.eu/osiris/>

Intermedia performance art is the Frankenstein's monster of art practice, resisting separation into discrete categories of painting and sculpture, live art and object. Mutant Salon's amalgamations of performative residue both function and fail as objects in a gallery context. Contrasted with the anonymously handcrafted phalluses pulled from the ONE Archive and displayed beneath acrylic boxes, and Kwak's delicate sculptures, the creations of Mutant Salon read less as precious objects, rather more disorderly. The provisional aspect of the sculptures and performances, suspended at the cusp of disintegration, absolves the viewer/participant of High Art's insistence on ranking and understanding creative work along a scale of importance.

Preciado says in his manifesto, "All newborn bodies shall have the right to a countersexual education."<sup>5</sup> He is referring to severing the presumption of filial love that accompanies the biological act of human reproduction, but also, the reproduction of binary, heteronormative gender and relationship constructions. Absent the rigid logic of the bio-family, Preciado suggests that the mutants and monsters of the dark might come to live gloriously in the sunlight. "Countersexual society favors the development of knowledge-pleasure; it favors the development of technologies aimed at a radical transformation of bodies and an interruption of human history as the naturalization of oppression."<sup>6</sup> As the boundaries of what constitutes "the human" are increasingly complicated by technologies of physical and virtual transformation, CAVERNOUS made a case for the next phase of our species' evolution toward a more pleasure-oriented existence.

Anuradha Vikram (born 1976, New York, NY; lives in Los Angeles) is a writer, curator, and educator.

5 Preciado p35

6 Preciado p37



**CAVERNOUS made a case for the next phase of our species' evolution toward a more pleasure-oriented existence.**

Installation images of CAVERNOUS. Photo by Christopher Wormald.

# MUTANT CONVERSATIONS

## Introduction

Hey queens! My name is **Phermosa**, it's hot gurl summer 2022, and I'm here to walk you through a series of conversations that reflect on the project, *CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon*, a summer residency and exhibition that took place at LACE in 2018.

Across this publication, you will encounter mutant conversations compounded by excerpts from three different dialogues that happened in different times, places, and moons.

On August 26th, 2018, just an hour before the final closing of *CAVERNOUS*, Mutant Salon members and curator Daniela Lieja Quintanar gathered in the green room to share their experiences as part of the LACE summer artist residency. Fast forward to four years later in March 2022, Young Joon and Daniela had a little kiki about *CAVERNOUS*, remembering and analyzing the ideas and labor that went into this experimental project. In May 2022, artists Sarah Gail and Dove Ayinde met online with Young and Daniela to extend the conversation.

In keeping with the queer oral history tradition, all three gatherings were recorded and transcribed. These mutant conversations were woven together with selected excerpts based on the following themes: LACE gallery as a Studio, Living Queer Archive, Legacy, Assemblage, Institutional Critique and Queer Futurity.

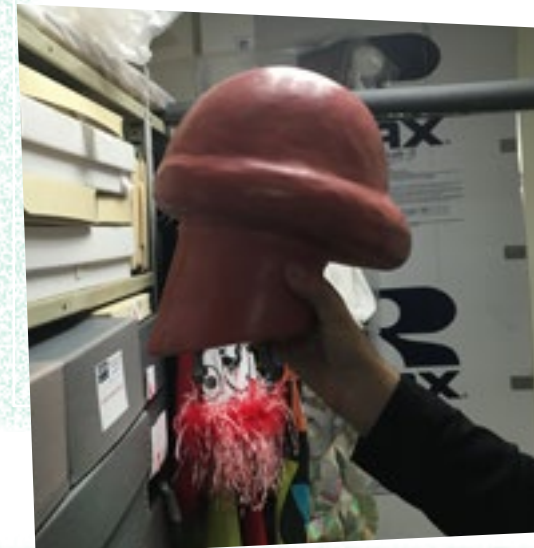
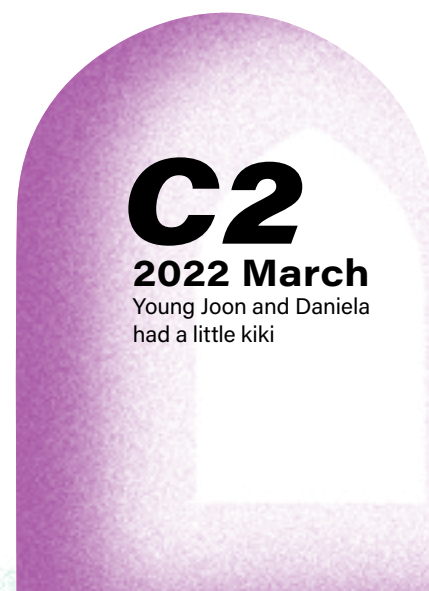
*CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon* exists across times and spaces. This book is an archive of QTBIPOC lived experiences in fullness as experienced by the members of Mutant Salon. These conversations share the ways in which we—LGBTQ and BIPOC folks—navigate and resist white supremacy and patriarchal hegemony, and manifest our dreams and desires through art.

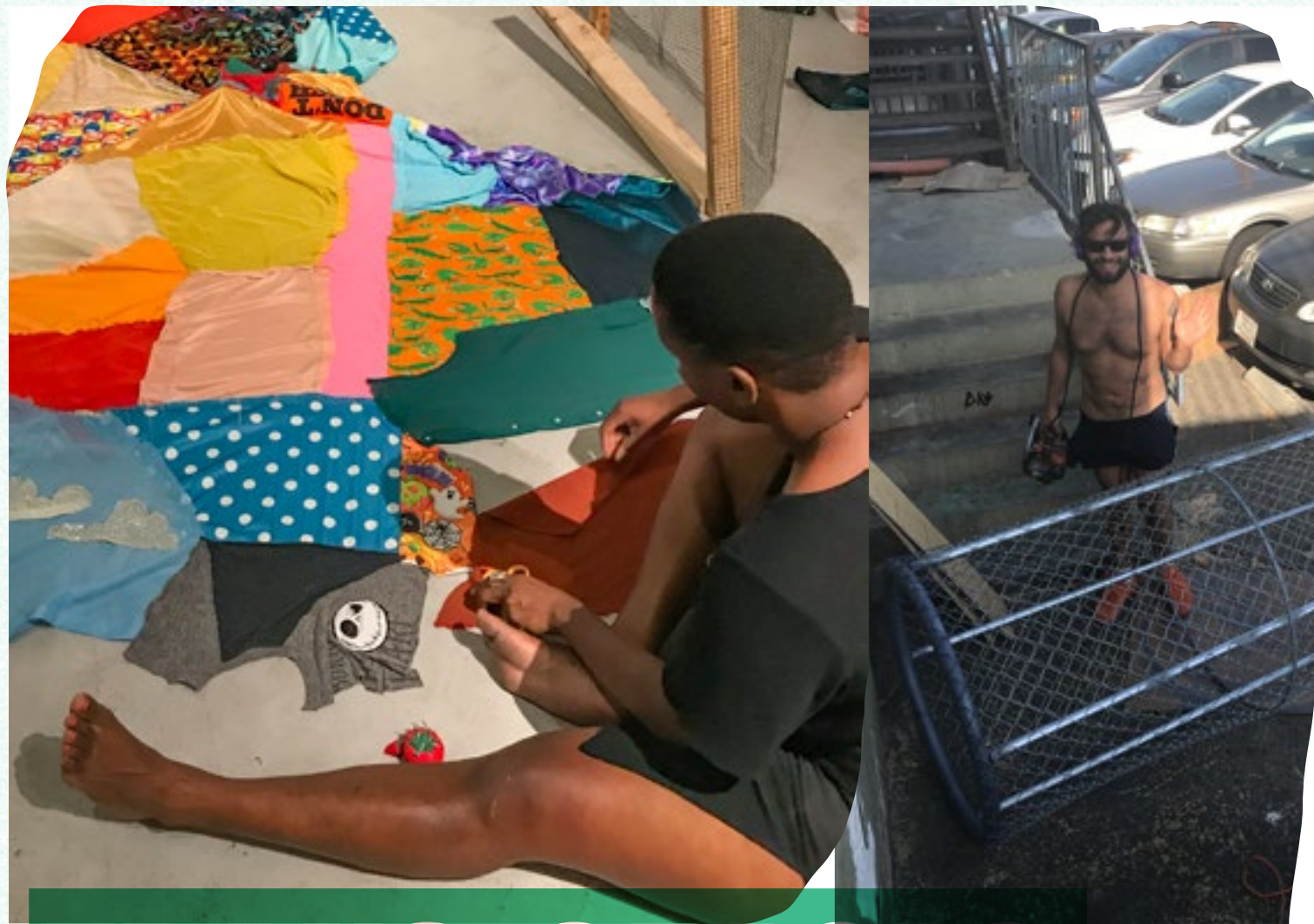


## ONE ARCHIVES

MC **Phermosa**: Over the course of a few years, Young Joon visited the One Archives to chat with then-curator David Evans Frantz about the objects that lacked any contextual information to be searchable in their existing database, that were contained in a storage room that wasn't open to the public. Young Joon affectionately referred to them as the "secret closet of trans-historical objects". These objects were of unknown origin, a queer time and place, but they seemed fresh and relevant, polytemporal, referencing genitals that have been transformed through different materials, functionality, form, to become some other enduringly queer object.

Series of photos taken by Young Joon Kwak of uncategorized objects by unknown artists at a closet in the ONE Archives at USC Libraries, 2018.





C2 **Young:** I remember feeding off of your [Daniela's] excitement for certain ideas. You mentioned that no one had created an installation using the art deco ceiling, and that it would eventually be torn down. So I took that opportunity and ran with it.

LACE opened up the gallery for all the Mutant Salon members to just exist and feel welcome and to use as their studio to create whatever, a month leading up to the show. I remember you [Daniela] and I really didn't know completely what would result from that. Like we had ideas of what each person was working on, but we didn't know what the end result would be. But it was just so important that everybody had the space to experiment. Because they didn't have studios.

**Daniela:** It was also about trust. LACE welcomed Mutant Salon to create whatever they wanted in our gallery. The creative process will take you somewhere. From objects to a performance in the middle of the gallery, a sculpture from start to finish at the last second, or shooting a music video before the opening night. I was so happy because LACE was full of so many people, it felt like a summer camp!

MC **Phermosa:** With the help of LACE's fierce apprentices and staff, Mutant Salon breathed new life inside of LACE with sculptures, installations, videos and performances; majority of these artworks were conceived right next to each other. The spirit of experimentation and kinship was at an all-time high during those days, and poured throughout the run of the exhibition during performances.

Left to right:  
Sarah Gail, Alice Cunt, Anna  
Luisa Petrisko, Jacinto  
Astiazarán, Andrew Freire  
and Jackie Castillo.

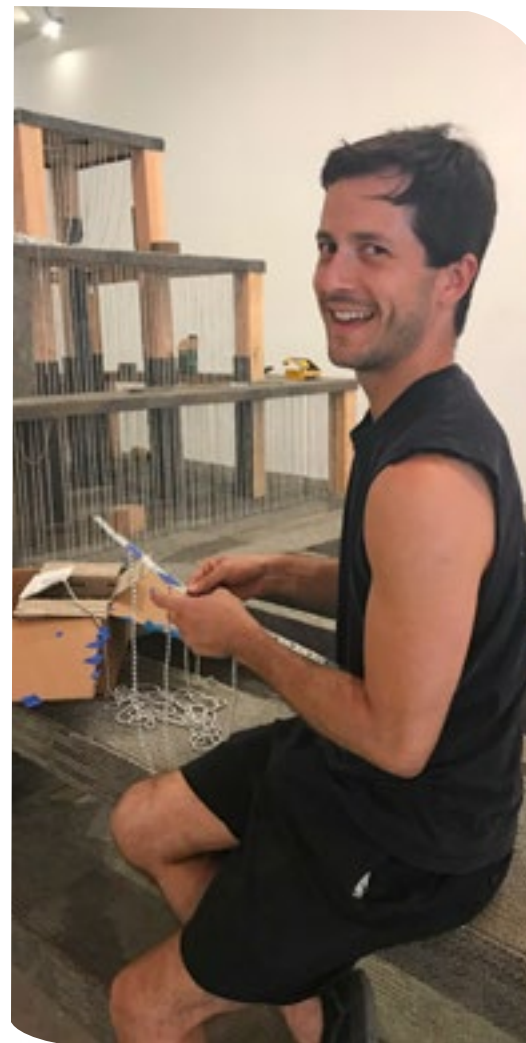
## TRANS-SPACES: LACE Gallery as a Studio

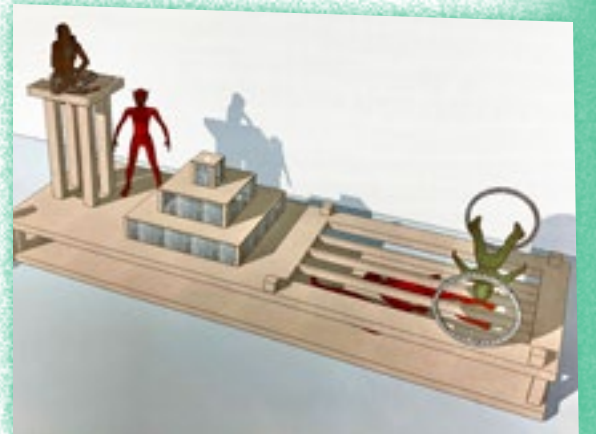
MC **Phermosa:** In the weeks leading up to the CAVERNOUS exhibition, Mutant Salon transformed the gallery into a working studio space to explore, tear apart, and piece together.

C3 **Sarah:** I spent a lot of time at LACE because I was building my installation there. I was sewing and constructing my space for nearly 20 hours a week. Honestly, I was there a lot, and I enjoyed being able to have that space. It's important to me to feel the energy of the space that my work and I will occupy. I need to blend my energy with that around me. The more space you have, the bigger your pieces can be. And the large-scale installation that I created would not have been possible to create if I did not have LACE's gallery for use as a studio.

**Dove:** Yes, I agree. It was very much a fulfilling experience to be very hands on at the gallery we showed work in. That was maybe my third time showing a film-based project that I completed in just one evening. It was awesome. Every time I walked into the studio, I knew I was going to gain a beautiful experience too, because everyone else was developing their work, kinda like inside a punk-y industrial factory. This is why spaces are so important for artists to have, especially in LA; there's a plethora of us trying to find studio space. Having peace of mind and a sense of safety is critical to creating. Especially for Black artists.

C1 **Dalton:** As someone who does not have an extensive formal art education, I had to think hard about things like how to present myself to a gallery and my work. Even performances can be hard, so how am I going to make art objects? How is my body going to be translated inside a new space? I didn't know how, when, or whether it was even possible. I've always wanted to show my work in a gallery setting. Up until recently, I was feeling frustrated by experiences with certain institutions. And, at the same time, I really feel a grand sense of responsibility. There are so many folks that I know that would just kill to have this opportunity.





Left to right:  
Dalton Chase Goulette,  
TravisD, Juan Manuel  
Gudiño, LACE Apprentices,  
Marvin Astorga, Project  
Rage Queen wigs outside  
of LACE. Young Joon Kwak,  
Wigs drawings for  
installation planning,  
(2018). Jacinto Astiazarán,  
*Dante's Crawlspace* render,  
(2018). Mark Golanco, Juan  
Gudiño and Daniela Lieja  
Quintanar.



# LIVING QUEER ARCHIVE

**C2 Daniela:** We have such a long queer history at LACE, it only felt natural to invite you and Mutant Salon for a summer residency. Several Chicano artists were a part of LACE's origins when it was first on Broadway street in downtown Los Angeles. You can trace similar artistic approaches in the space since its beginning. The assemblage you all did look a lot like what artists did back in the early LACE days, such as the mythical GRONKPATSSIPARTY Halloween art night back in 1978, organized by Patssi Valdez and Gronk. There is great photo documentation by artist Louise Jacinto of that night. The punk band "The Snappers"—who later became the famous electro-punk group "Gender Nervous"—performed. On Dia de los Muertos, Jerri Allyn presented a performance with a group of artists dressed as skeletons, and there was a red plush bar that got transformed into an altar with stuffed animals dedicated to her bruja grandma!

Multiple things happened simultaneously in this punk environment. I love to read and draw attention back to the histories of LACE's early days. So, I said, 'working with Young and Mutant Salon on a project would be a perfect way to honor and continue the legacy of artists at LACE.'

**Young:** We are building on such an amazing radical punk legacy that is older than us. I hope future generations will continue to push it even further.



Opposite from left to right: James, Bobby and Mario at GRONKPATSSIPARTY Halloween party at LACE's first location on Broadway St., 1978. Photo by Louis Jacinto. Louis Jacinto and Ruben Zavala at GRONKPATSSIPARTY Halloween party at LACE's first location on Broadway St., 1978. Photo by Louis Jacinto. Documentation of *Laughing Souls/ Espíritus Sonrientes* by Jerri Allyn. Performance at LACE October 31-November 2, 1979.

This page from left to right: Closeup of wigs on display at Hollywood Wigs. Rosario Ribera, Hollywood Wigs stylist.

**C2 Daniela:** I want to bring up the wonderful Living Queer Archive that you created for CAVERNOUS. With this unique body of work, you are more than just historicizing yourself, Mutant Salon, or the artists that influenced you. You're saying: "This is for living now, and towards the future, with the past." This raises a lot of questions, like, "how is this living archive going to exist in "our" future?"

**Young:** People often think about archives as merely a "historical record" for history's sake. But it's [archives are] "living", in the sense that we're tracing just a few points in a growing lineage, from which we could learn, add to, and move forward. History is not a given, nor is it objective. We're taking control of creating our own historical context, in which we find a greater sense of belonging. How can queering the archive affect the meaning of everything we're doing now and, in turn, affect how we move forward and contribute back to this growing archive, dialogue, family, and community?

We're all occupying the same space and partaking in transforming the historical present in real-time—as bodies and objects in the exhibition space—that lives on through those that experienced it and were moved by it, and through this publication. It's about reimagining the archive as a space of liveness, discovering new connections across time and space, countering the invalidation and alienation of institutionalized white supremacist narratives, building community, reclaiming agency, and collectively re-creating alternative realities.

**C1 Marvin:** I think personal and collective growth are really important to have a record of, too. In some ways, doing something collectively like that leaves a very different archival and historical imprint than just an individual's practice. I mean, they're different things, but I think that a collective has a lot of power in expressing something politically in a more forceful way. Especially in making changes within the institutions that purport to be on the side of artists but are really self-interested and large. That is a boon for all artists. I look back on the work of collectives and see how they were able to open up spaces for everybody. Artists and non-artists alike, audiences, and performers. Even documenting the collective and individual growth of the people involved, it's sort of a different trajectory than the growth of an individual artist that I think is really important to be part of an archive. Historicizing a collective mode of making art.

**C2 Daniela:** The bridge you built to connect migration stories inside the Living Queer Archive was and is fundamental. I am referring to the special collaboration you did with (la difunta) the now closed next-door Hollywood Wigs store. Korean families have dedicated themselves to this business in LA for years, as well as Latinx wig stylists (an invisible labor), like Rosario Ribera. There has been so much erasure of queer and immigrant histories in LA's multi-cultural landscape, and you are reclaiming those histories and making them visible.

**MC Phermosa:** You know, I heard from girls that Rosario came to the gallery a few times to freshen up the 3 gorgeous wigs in the show so they would stay snatched; no single hair strand out of place, honey! Young Joon bought these wigs from Ellen and Christine You, a mother and daughter who owned the Hollywood Wigs store. They ran this charming shop in the neighborhood for 40 years but unfortunately went out of business at the end of 2018 due to high rent spikes and little support from the city to retain the BIPOC-owned storefronts on the Boulevard.



Installation view of Living Queer Archive section. Photo by Christopher Wormald.





Opposite left to right:  
Installation view of Living  
Queer Archive section.  
Young Joon Kwak, *Surveil-  
lance Mirror Vaginis*, 2018.  
Photos by Christopher  
Wormald.

This page left to right:  
Photograph of Emory  
Douglas and the work  
*Afro-American Solidarity  
with the Oppressed People  
of the World* at LACE (Los  
Angeles Contemporary  
Exhibitions). *Woman's  
Zapatista Embroidery Col-  
lective* in collaboration with  
Emory Douglas, *Zapantera  
Negra Servicio Noticiero  
Intercultural* from *Zapan-  
tera Negra* project, Mexico,  
Chiapas 2012-16. © 2022  
Emory Douglas / Licensed  
by AFNYLAW.com

**C2 Young:** I think it's so important to also mention the Emory Douglas show that you and Essence Harden curated [Emory Douglas: *Bold Visual Language*, presented in the store front]. His show shared time and space with ours. The Emory Douglas project in and of itself was an amazing living archive; it included Emory's current work and the Black Panthers' original newspapers, as well as works by a group of artists from different generations responding to it.

The collaboration you brought onto the facade of LACE—Emory's banner that read "Afro-American solidarity with the oppressed People of the world," along with my neon work *Preferred Pronouns* reading "She, Her, They, Them" framed the entrance of LACE. Inside the gallery, there was an embroidered version of the banner that was made by Zapatista women collective in collaboration with Douglas.

**Daniela:** *Preferred Pronouns* was one of the early works I remember you telling me about the most. You said, "I want to QUEER THE BUILDING!" And I was like, "YES, PLEASE DO IT!" Then we thought about hanging the pink banner with a Black Panther woman, an iconic image of Douglas on the facade above your neon sign. This was a form to trace and affirm cross solidarity networks, no matter differences in time, geography or language. As the embroidered banner says "La Rebeldía se globaliza cada día" (The rebellion becomes global each day)... That hot summer was so powerful!



ASS

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L AGE

Installation view of  
CAVERNOUS. Photo by  
Christopher Wormald.



C2 **Young:** Yeah and with the *Ceiling Vaginis Light Drip* (2018) piece it's also about trans and non-normative bodies. What we see and how we read them on the surface. Our bodies are really cavernous, in terms of all the depths and subtle nuances of how we sense them, what they feel like. There's so much to be unearthed. The erotic experimentality is a part of it. It has to do with the difficulty of comprehending all of it. That is why CAVERNOUS is so hard to describe too. We have been alienated from all the debts of fully knowing and understanding, accepting ourselves and our bodies. This is a space for that kind of non-coherence.

C1 **Dove:** Whenever I walked into the gallery during the residency and exhibition run, I felt like I was not here anymore. I'm not in Los Angeles. I'm not in Hollywood. I'm not anywhere this place is, physically. We've managed to successfully execute our vision of a world that people only get a glimpse of. What we leave behind will be instilled in us and can't be taken away from us. It's like a really big spiritual footprint. For us and by us. The footprint will always remain here.

**Alice:** Whether we are working inside an institution, we regard ourselves as artists. We're creating, expressing, interpreting and telling truths that nobody hears often enough. As far as Project Rage Queen goes, I've always felt them as a virtual space where we gather and design together. We're just exploring more caves that open up every time we get together, and we are just building and building. We explore new realms of ourselves, creating in different mediums. I wanted to provide the platform as a representation of what we've been provided throughout our residency. All these platforms/sculptures that we've gotten to stand on, and now, returning a stage for the public. I wanted it to be a symbolic stage where everyone feels they can go ahead, stand up and perform whatever they need to express.

## ASSEMBLAGE

MC **Phermosa:** CAVERNOUS is this a kaleidoscopic installation, composed of unique fragments reconstructed from smaller pieces. When these fragments are collaged together, dynamic levels of affect begin to form in between the cracks. Like... assemblage. The importance of platforms came up a lot in several conversations; queer folks paving spaces and ways for others to shine.

C1 **Dove:** When I look back on being a part of the Mutant Salon collective, I'm grateful. What we do in this collective can never be predicted. There is no set routine, aside from everyone's individual concepts and what they're inspired by. It is what they manifest into existence. I also feel that Mutant Salon practices one of my definitions of queerness: we do not categorize. We are dismantling the concept of being a categorical entity, and using labels to assign and typecast certain forms of showing one's creative efforts. I would say that is an art form in of itself. And I think we did that pretty well in this group.

C2 **Daniela:** I think CAVERNOUS has multiple shapes, textures, colors, smells, temperatures, temperaments... that open access to other forms of being. Our bodies are so deep like a cave and there's so much to explore, CAVERNOUS invited us to go deeply inward. We live in a world where systems of unchecked power repress, mutilate us, not only through the body, but also our multiple forms of being. This impedes us from exploring how we want to use our bodies and excavate intimacy and sexuality.



Left to right:  
Installation view of Mutant Salon section. Photo by Christopher Wormald.  
Detail of a sculpture by Project Rage Queen in Mutant Salon Section. Photos by Christopher Wormald.



All photos of artworks by Christopher Wormald. See full Exhibition Checklist on pg 74-75.



C2 **Daniela:** I became very interested in the different layers of your [Young's] artistic practice, sculpture, video, and performance, including collective creation. You explore the body, and the multiple forms of being that involve body parts through different textures, shapes, and colors that you then mesh to become new creations. Your work challenges the conservative social order of how subjects have to be. Western culture has rejected, repressed, policed, and controlled our bodies. Your work proposes liberating ways of existing. The use of your materials—clay, plaster, light, hair, metal—are materials that stretch, compact, and shine. They can be wet and dry, soft and hard, transparent and opaque. Your sculptures are always in transit (transit). They are bodies that can unfold and rearrange. They can be one thing or the other. You have built a body of work that frames critical discourses and create strong links to social movements (we have talked about the Stonewall riots and the Black Panthers Movement). For me, it is inevitable to think about the idea of transfeminism that Tijuana critic and thinker Sayak Valencia has developed in a context between

Latinamerica and the border. The transfeminist perspective operates beyond white feminism and TERFs, basing itself under an approach that focuses on the condition of transit, migration, race, mestizaje, vulnerability, class, and gender rooted in living memory of social insurrections. This idea connects with the network of histories, movements, expressions, and collective work that the *Living Queer Archive* presented and that you and Mutant Salon continuously explore.



All photos of artworks by Christopher Wormald. See full Exhibition Checklist on pg 74-75.



# CELESTIAL, TERRESTRIAL, & INFERNAL EVENTS

Matt Savitsky performing  
at the CAVERNOUS opening.  
Photo by Christopher  
Wormald.



# CELESTIAL, TERRESTRIAL & INFERNAL EVENTS

C1 **Alli:** I realized halfway through the run of the CAVERNOUS exhibition that the scheduled programs coincided with really cool and major celestial events. We opened CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon on a full moon and we're closing tonight on a full moon again. Every time we had an event, there were new moons, eclipses, and more.

## Opening Reception

Featuring performances by Project Rage Queen (Dalton Chase Goulette, TravisD, and Alice Cunt), Matt Savitsky, Long Long (Thin Nguyen) and Alli Miller

July 12, 2018, 5-9PM



MC **Phermosa:** I remember that opening night: Long Long (Thin Nguyen) wore a cute cotton candy wig adorned with a flower crown; she frolicked and gave an interpretive walkthrough of the show to the new mutants [audience members]. Alli Miller handed out brightly colored, hand-painted flags she made for the occasion, with synonyms for vagina. Matt Savitsky draped themselves in plaster all around the gallery, letting the material calcify. The famous human cat tree created by Jacinto Astiazarán was a stage for all kinds of performances, as a lounge, playground and zone of comfort. He called it Dante's Crawlspac! The evening was fabulous.

Deep inside the gallery, TravisD performed on top of these lit platforms with her shades on while Dalton strutted in concrete stilettos; both of these queens wore Juan Gudiño's paintings like haute couture. The mutants lounged inside Sarah Gail's Hybernate tent installation and played Anna Luisa Petrisko's video game JEEP JEEP that teleports you to a Filipinx ancestry trip. In the middle of the chaos, you saw a mutant gym with a red fountain and a large cave-like wig made up of smaller wigs; toward the back of the gallery a flamboyant pink screen projected musical and performance videos by the Jeepneys, The Bedroom Witch, Dorian Wood, Sister Mantos, and more artists. Everyone was under the CAVERNOUS spell, and enjoyed being part of it.

Left to right: Dalton Chase Goulette, TravisD and Juan Manuel Gudiño at the CAVERNOUS opening. Photos by Christopher Wormald.

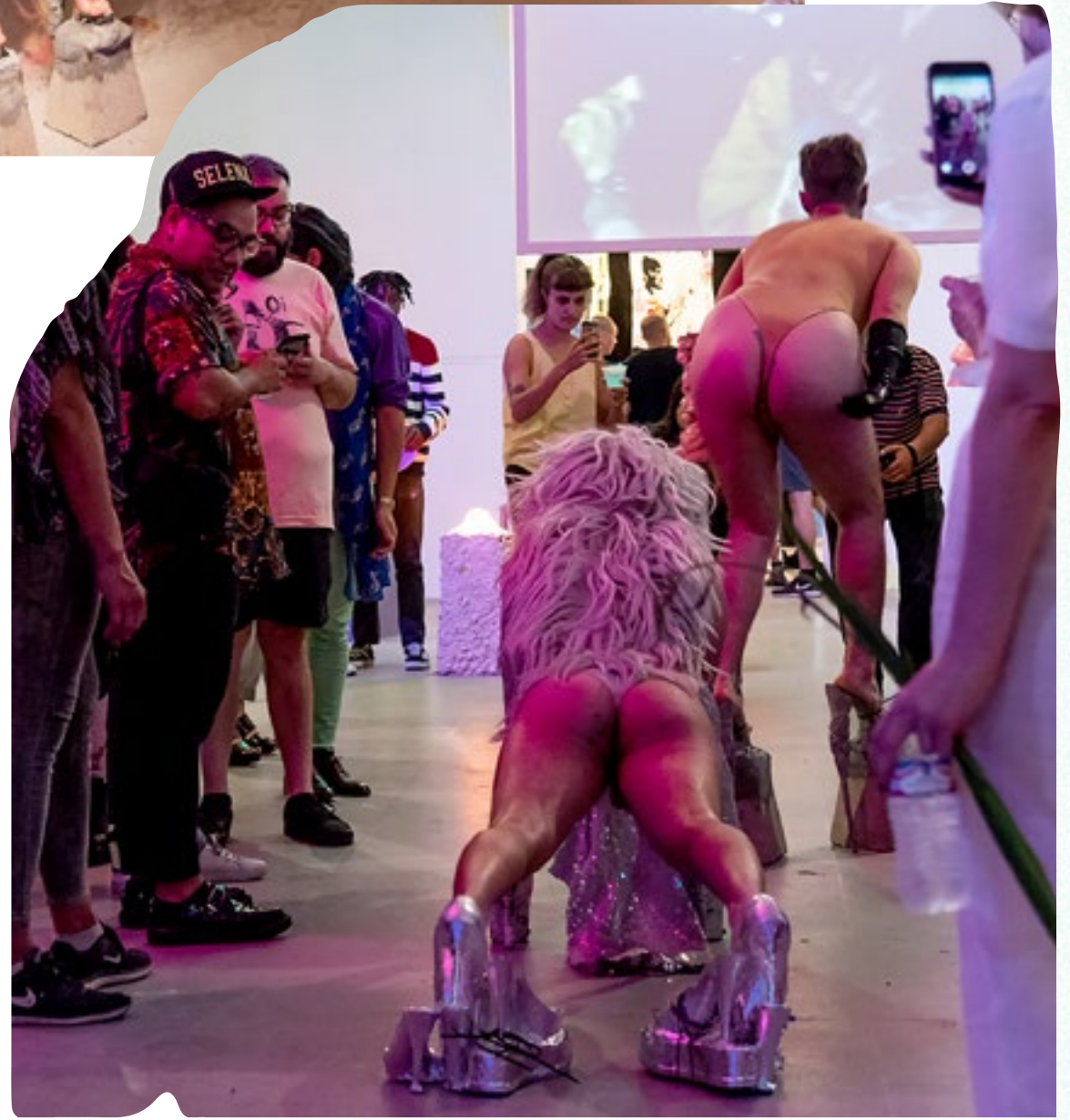


Left to right:  
 Alli Miller at the closing.  
 Photo by Andrew Freire.  
 Long Long (Thin Nguyen)  
 leading guided tours  
 during the opening. Photos  
 by Christopher Wormald.





Left to right:  
Matt Savitsky, TravisD  
and Dalton Chase Goulette  
performing at the opening.  
Photos by Christopher  
Wormald.





Left to right:  
Xina Xurner (Marvin Astorga  
and Young Joon Kwak), San  
Cha, DJ La Disco es Qultura,  
and Cirizia performing at  
the closing of CAVERNOUS.  
Photos by Andrew Freire.

## Closing Reception

Featuring musical performances by San Cha, Xina Xurner and Project Rage Queen. DJ La Disco es Qultura. Debut screening of new music video *Inténtame* by Xina Xurner featuring San Cha, directed by Jacinto Astiazarán.

August 26, 2018, 3–6PM

MC **Phermosa:** On the last moon of CAVERNOUS, Mutant Salon turned all the way up! LACE premiered the music video of INTÉNTAME (TRY ME), and Xina Xurner and San Cha performed the song live, and slaaayeedd–Dalton, TravisD and Mark GolaMco gave the mutants life with a performance that included improvisation with a saxophone and violin. Alice Cunt served body and danced across the main gallery and Cirizia read aloud a powerful poem from the top of the cat tree. CAVERNOUS ended in a dance party DJ'd by La Disco es Qultura; everyone danced closely with everyone else, embracing all of the strangeness and shamelessness concocted by Mutant Salon and its newest mutant members.





Left to right:  
TravisD, Alice Cunt, Mark  
Golamco; Alice Cunt; Dal-  
ton Chase Goulette; Moz,  
Daniela Lieja Quintanar and  
Corazon Del Sol. Photos by  
Andrew Freire.

# BLACK TED

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH  
PERSPECTIVES



IN THE FIELD

BlackTED speaker  
Micah James displays  
a photo of (left to right)  
Denise Gordy, Bianca Law-  
son, and Richard Lawson  
(Black American family)  
in a presentation entitled  
'Lightskin: Where do we  
draw the line?'



# BLACKTED

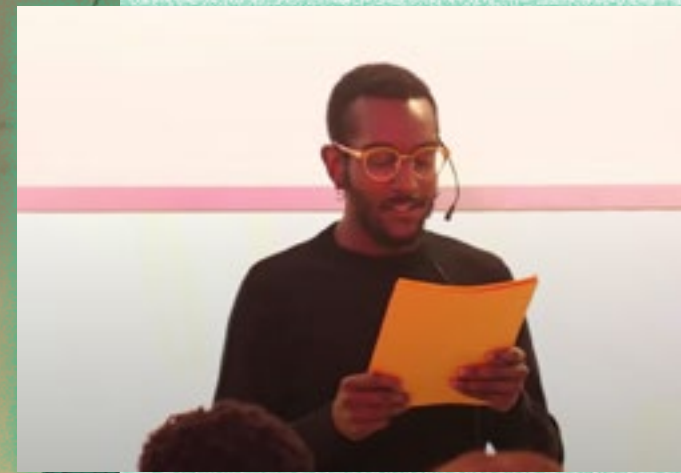
## Independent Research Perspectives in the Field

Organized by Mutant Salon members Sarah Gail and Dove Ayinde  
August 11, 2018, 7pm

MC **Phermosa:** Black TED: Independent Research Perspectives in the Field was an event that artists Sarah Gail and Dove Ayinde organized as part of CAVERNOUS programming with the participation of artists Brandon Drew Holmes, Micah James and Elliot Reed. They shared personal stories and critical observations about Black experiences under gallows humor; think tanks, satire, and irony were present that night. LACE had a full house, I remember the roaring laughter; Black TED left everyone blown away.

C3 **Dove:** [That night] you weren't just getting one delivery of a message or a lecture or performance. We shared perspectives about Black life that you could either be new to hearing, or relate, and be amused by. The audience was captivated and informed at the same time. Looking back, I recognize that my own performance might not have been the most optimistic—maybe even a bit somber—but still genuine and thoughtful nonetheless.

**Sarah:** Everything was cool at first. Once BlackTED was done, people walked outside to get some fresh air, the police started bothering people, and handed out tickets to two or three people for drinking. One person had a small glass of water, and the other person had an orange can of soda. One of the officers stated that they had an undercover cop at the event, and that's how they knew that BlackTED was happening. They came just to harass people. They didn't state how they found out about the event, or why they decided to infiltrate the event, but they went ahead and illegally ticketed two of our attendees.



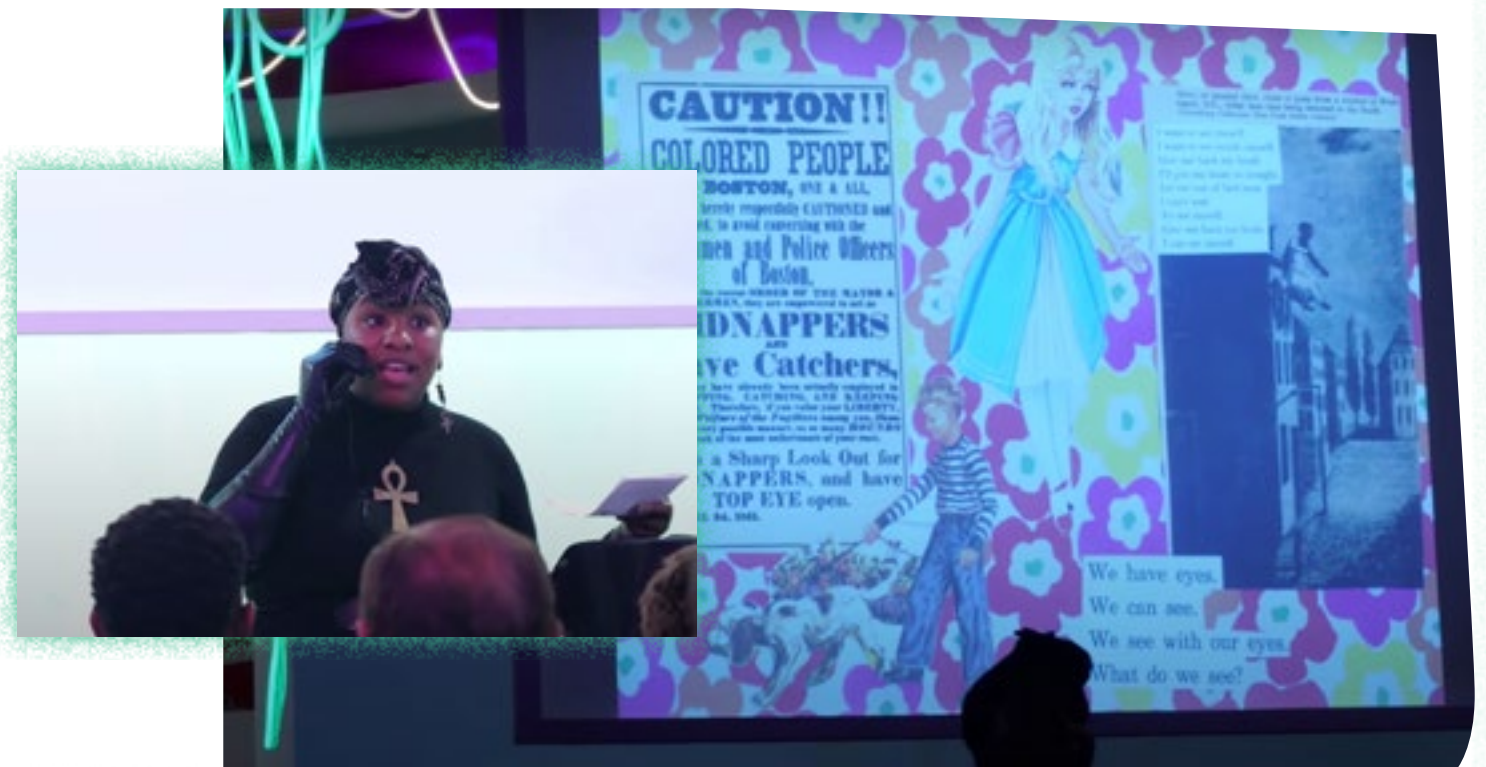
C3 **Dove:** I needed a moment to just remember the chronology of that night 'cuz it was pretty eventful. Black TED was presented inside LACE, which lives on a really popular street. The people that were harassed and given tickets weren't white, they were Black. Four police officers stared down at us, gaslighted us. The officers wanted to herd everyone out to the boulevard.

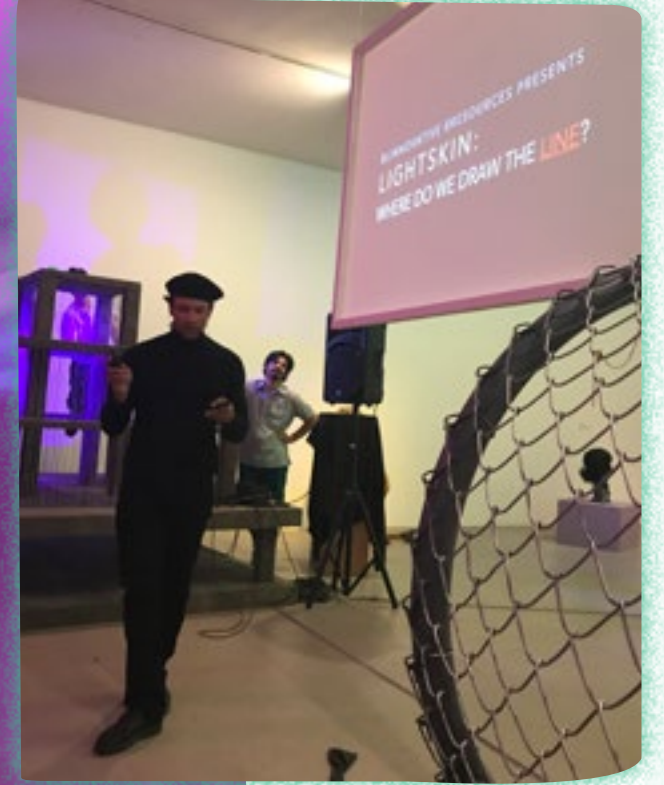
But again, this is an intimidation tactic by authorities. I think about the dynamic too, with our performance that was activated and delivered right beside the Emory Douglas exhibition. I can't see that as just a mere coincidence! It was a pretty significant indication—you don't need physical weapons beyond speaking your truth and expressing yourself, to warrant authorities to come down and placate the area and see what's going on—that you're already seen as a threat.

**Sarah:** This isn't the first time that Dove and/or I have hosted an event, and we were met with violence from strangers who tried to bulldoze the space. On this particular occasion, after the frustration and the worry for the people who got ticketed and seeing all the other attendees leave, I felt empowered from the way my words produced such a reaction. The fact that Black people just talking about shit could bring the cops outside and have them be so upset. It made me feel like what I had to say was important. It affirmed my performance and my message.

I consider my art to be activism, and I know artists who don't consider themselves to be activists but are labeled as such because they're misrepresented. In regards to BlackTED, the event was art. Freedom of expression until our opinions became considered dangerous. When we got push-back from the authorities, our art became activism.

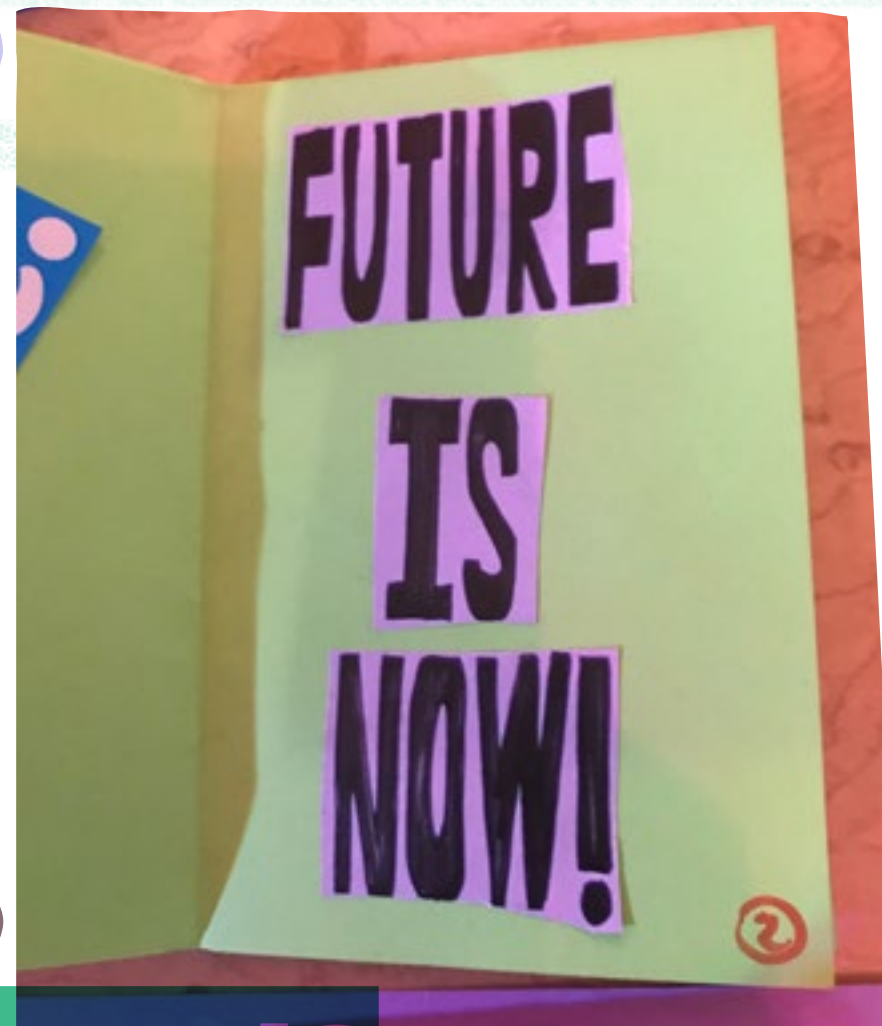
Left to right:  
Sarah Gail, Elliot Reed,  
Brandon Drew-Holmes,  
Dove Ayinde delivering their  
BlackTED presentations.





Left to right:  
Documentation of Black-TED; Micah James, Thed Jewel, Sarah Gail, Brandon Drew Holmes, Dove Ayinde and Elliot Reed.





## MY FRIEND'S PLACE ZINE WORKSHOP

C2 **Young:** The zine workshop with My Friend's Place (MFP) that Sarah, Dove and Roxy organized was so special—it provided unhoused youth in Hollywood an outlet to express themselves, especially since their voices aren't heard because of their age.

MC **Phermosa:** My Friend's Place is an organization that serves unhoused communities in Hollywood. They have been here since 1988, a few years before LACE arrived on the boulevard!

C3 **Sarah Gail:** The zine event really meant a lot to me. I think it's important to engage with the public and to empower them to be able to create art and put their thoughts and emotions onto paper.

**Dove:** We reviewed the idea of self-publishing and making your own zine from scratch; I think the folks who came to the workshop enjoyed themselves a lot too. There's a lot going on when you're living on the streets. If you're in between jobs or homes, or if you're just looking for a place to be safe and be creative for a few hours. It was great that LACE and CAVERNOUS welcomed them.

C2 **Young:** For my pronouns piece, I was thinking a lot about all the queer/trans/non-binary people who get their health care at the LGBTQ+ center around the corner, and all the surrounding organizations catering to these communities in Hollywood.

**Daniela:** This is something that I have learned about Hollywood over my years at LACE. Young Black and Brown folks come to Hollywood looking for "the dream," escaping from their own families that do not accept them, or simply for the adventure. But these streets are rough! There is a high risk of dying and being literally swept away by police, government and developers, because of their cruel goal to "clean" the city.



Documentation of My Friend's Place zine workshop in 2018.



# INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE

**C1 Dalton:** I know that we ran into some roadblocks, because we thought, “do we even want to fuck with the people that are running these institutions?” Are they going to water our work down? The thing that made everyone uncomfortable is the gorgeous core of what we do.

**Travis:** Performing at the Hammer with Mutant Salon brought me a deep sense of vulnerability... the audience members would ask, “what is this? Is this art?” And to that, I say, “it’s a museum, so, yeah!” I really feel like we project ourselves through this collective by inevitably breaking the social norm, or breaking institutional expectations because we’re being ourselves.

Together we’ve had to struggle to maintain who we are, in the face of institutions ran by people and values that want to dictate us how to work. That raw element that we bring that makes audiences uneasy; that is our gemstone.

**Young:** I was just thinking about arts institutions like the Hammer. It’s the small details, behind the scenes kind of things, when they put a warning label in front of our show...

“BEWARE! You might see nudity or like objectionable bodies.”

And we’re like, “wait, actually, no. This all needs to be changed because don’t you realize that’s like, at the core of what we’re fighting against?” They are policing and categorizing our bodies that way! We experienced that messy language and called it out, and then they changed the wording around that. They said next, “there are different types of bodies in different states of “undress,” and this is what the project is about; like, really contextualizing the project in a better way.

And then just in terms of the bathrooms, I remember Dalton had an unpleasant experience, and so did others. They can’t be policing bodies, telling people which bathrooms they can use.

We are often placed into these categories, but we’re taking control of the narrative. We are creating, tracing our own genealogies and adding to the histories that we want to add to. Mutant Salon is all about chosen families. We are a chosen community. We are not tossed in there, forced to be in the same grouping. And yes, we are all queer, POC, femme, or whatever, but we are real friends; it goes so much deeper than just these labels. It’s complicated and messy. Not everyone will see every little thing.



**C2 Young:** How does CAVERNOUS change when people don’t see the performances, or know how this all came to be? A lot of people don’t know that this is the product of a community. And this all was born out of these conversations, and real friendships and relationships, and sharing of skills, time and resources through working in the gallery with each other.

**C3 Dove:** I was intrigued at how the authorities escalated everything outside [of LACE] so quickly. As if someone was going to set the building on fire. But again, it just goes to show how Black presence in art (live or recorded) is going to leave passion, or a feeling of empowerment or threat behind. And with the authorities, we’re always going to be seen as a threat.

I don’t think that this is an issue that is going anywhere. The Black Panther Party is always going to be a landmark organization in this country and in this culture, but it seems like it will always be surveilled. When it comes to Black art and expression, the imperial powers of authorities have to constantly keep tabs on what we do individually. As if Black people are a monolith.

**C1 Alli:** It’s so easy to forget though, that institutions are non-human. Institutions are composed of individuals. Though I do believe that the museum can do some learning and be better. Institutions are rooted in something that’s more corporate or patriarchal.

**Marvin:** Museums seek to turn you into a product. And if they can’t, they don’t know how to deal with a person. A real person that’s complex and shifting and fluid. The museum needs you to be a product that’s packaged, stamped, and copyrighted. It’s always, “give me a top-line summary, give me a three-sentence paragraph, and then give me your essay”. When you do all that, you’re not who you are. This is the packaged version of you for institutions only. But if you are just being yourself in your art, you’re breaking some rules.

**Daniela:** There’s something about what you just said... I think it’s very important that institutions see what Mutant Salon is doing. I really believe in doing radical things inside the institution. It is a long term battle that we need to do, challenging and transforming at least some people. The museum needs to become a really different thing because the founding concept of museums have colonial and white supremacist roots. Mutant Salon is a platform to intervene and damage the inside of the structure. You have to create these platforms and work collectively. It’s a form of resistance.

San Cha Y Las Sirenas performing at the Festival de las Muertas at the Hammer Museum, 2016. Festival de las Muertas flyer for the Hammer Museum designed by Marvin Astorga, 2016. Mutant Salon performing at the Broad Museum, 2016. Photo by Dicko Chan.





# FAMILY, COMMUNITY & QUEER FUTURITY

**C1 Dalton:** I read or heard something that was along the lines of, 'human connection is based on the core'. Well, it's based on consistent ritualism. And I think that's why churches provide a grand sense of community for people because it's a consistent ritual that allows for human connectedness. I have felt that experience of connectivity with Mutant Salon. I can be a very anxious and agoraphobic kind of person.

I come from a background of "rehearse, rehearse, rehearse," and have a "script," and always know where you're going. That training always provided me comfort, and I think the discomfort from not knowing what's going to happen next with Mutant Salon brought me so much growth. I want to thank Mutant Salon for that. I had no idea that it would be like this when I came in as a club kid who partied, I mean, I think I was really young when we first met. Maybe like 21 or 22.

**Travis:** If we're going to continue and develop more projects, we need to accept ourselves as artists. If you're going to be a hundred percent yourself, you are going to be breaking the law because we are showing a part of society that has not been, you know, fully accepted as law-abiding. Even by just being yourself.

**Dalton:** I love that you said "accept yourself as an artist" because that's been a personal struggle of mine.

**Daniela:** It's an honor for me to have collaborated with everyone in Mutant Salon, and to get to know you individually, watch all your processes coalesce. It was just amazing to see how everybody built their own artwork; there was a lot of learning for and from everybody. Our public, a mix of locals, contemporary art lovers, colleagues and tourists all LOVED this show. So many families with children walking on the boulevard stopped by, and nobody was freaking out over seeing a penis- or vagina-shaped artwork.



**C3 Sarah:** I think that it's important for anybody who's collaborating with somebody else to make sure that they're both on the same page and that they have the same goal in mind. Collaboration can be stressful if it's not organized and honest. Be clear, concise, and go. Don't tell yourself "no" before somebody else has asked you what you want. Don't turn yourself down. Go for it! Go after your dreams, kid!

**Dove:** People are going to agree with your art, or like it, or see camaraderie with it. If it happens, that's great. But that should never be your motivation. It should be to constantly express a version of yourself and intentions as honest and as authentic as possible.

**C2 Daniela:** For any artist or creative, it is critical that you say: this is my practice. This is who I am. And this is what I am connected to, and what influenced me. I met you [Young] at USC back in 2013, and I was very fascinated to see your process. I was able to peek into your studio often and look around. The first performance that I saw in the United States when I arrived in Los Angeles was Xina Xurner at the MFA USC Open Studios! The bright kitchen and sterile hallway entrance of the MFA and MA Roski building were transformed into a place for screams, sounds and dance. I have experienced Mutant Salon performances and installations in very institutional spaces like the Hammer and Redcat, but also in galleries like Commonwealth and Council. Since 2013, I have always had a crush on Mutant Salon and its community-friendships aesthetics and I wanted to work with you.

**Young:** We're not a 501c3 organization, nor a business, or some other capitalist entity that needs to reach quarterly goals to successfully achieve standards of financial stability or longevity. We [Mutant Salon] are individual and collective glitches within a capitalist system that was not made for us. We refuse to be co-opted into this system. Over the years, I realized I wanted others to use Mutant Salon as inspiration to start their own mutant salons without having to call them that because it isn't a brand. And I wanted people in Mutant Salon to be able to grow and do their own thing, for Mutant Salon to provide a platform for others to find opportunities and go on to do new things. That's where this publication comes in; sharing some of our experiences and what we've learned so that artists and curators can use Mutant Salon as a model for community-based artistic collaboration or to dream up something more.

**MC Phermosa:** Hey queens! I'm glad to see you made it to the end. Our book is not just an exhibition catalogue for *CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon*, but an embodied testament of the creativity and resilience of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC artists. These mutant conversations speak of a collective magic and love for art and community. We want to honor our trans-cestors and all our queer kin who created paths for us to do this work, and the generations of fierce artists to come.

This is for you, and the children. This is for us.

Opposite:  
Juan Manuel Gudiño, Alice Cunt, Dalton Chase Goulette, TravisD, Sarah Gail, Marvin Astorga, Dove Ayinde, Oscar Santos, and Elliot Reed.

Above left to right:  
Corazon del Sol and Ron Athey. Xina Xurner (Marvin Astorga and Young Joon Kwak).



MC **Phermosa:** An important part of the LGBTQ+ community is its warrior history. LACE's mutant audience was graced by prominent elder voices, sharing their journey and imparting wisdom. The full transcript of the conversation is available online, but here is a short and sweet summary from our bestie, Bradford Nordeen.

## ORAL HISTORIES OF QUEER RESISTANCE

by **Bradford Nordeen**

Young Joon Kwak and Marvin Astorga served as curators for the site-specific festival *Dirty Looks: On Location*, which was going on at the same time as *CAVERNOUS*. Kwak telephoned me one day sounding a little nervous – why? For fear of double dipping? They proposed to fill their LACE installation with seniors sharing their experience of activism: what brought us from the dawn of the Gay Rights Movement from the late 60s to today. I mean, I was thrilled. And so we sought out our voices.

Much has been written about loss and the current queer generation's lack of mentors, in the wake of the HIV/AIDS crisis and on account of the violence that has claimed so many of our trans elders. The audience that assembled that hot July evening evinced that urgency with a bustling assembly. Gathered before them were former Cockettes Dolores DeLuce and Fayette Hauser, Sir SheAh Prince Eternal and trans rights pioneer Leon



Documentation of Oral Histories of Queer Resistance event at LACE.

Mostovoy. Their largely-younger audience encircled the group with a rapt engagement. And each participant brought a different tone, a different approach to their oral history. While DeLuce lamented those lost, SheAh Prince Eternal held the audience, through a deep belief in self-love and larger sense of cultural permission.

It was a fabulous and baroque arrangement of elements: our storied speakers, their avid audience and the sculptural objects and flickering videos that filled the space, upon which participants perched and were caught in their beams. The objects, permutating as they are, between forms, and our sweaty bodies in the space of *CAVERNOUS*, caught in this dialogue, which wasn't directed at us by the speakers, but sort of poured around us, giving the younger generation space to throw back, to contribute, to participate and add to and be a part of that queer history.

*Bradford Nordeen is the Founder and Creative Director of Dirty Looks (formerly Dirty Looks: On Location), a platform to highlight queer film, video, installation and performance art across Los Angeles and New York City.*



## Oral Histories of Queer Resistance

July 20, 2018, 7–9pm

In collaboration with Dirty Looks: On Location and the Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Guest speakers: Dolores DeLuce, Fayette Hauser, Leon Mostovoy, and SheAh Prince Eternal

Forty nine years after Stonewall Riots, younger generations are invited to learn about the time when it was illegal to be open about one's sexual orientation or gender, while understanding that the struggle still persists and needs to be connected with its history. In order to understand our position in this current political and social climate, and to imagine the possibilities of what queer resistance could look like, it is crucial to hear and archive the stories of older generations who dealt with the stigmas of illness, perversion, and policing bodies.

**I can live free, and I can say I am Sir SheAh Prince Eternal or Mr. SheAh Prince Eternal and I can wear lipstick if I want to, Prince did. I mean I like the way that it enhances my features. I can't change how I look, but I can change how I look at myself inside and I can embrace myself fully, love myself fully, I love the hell out of myself. I can hug myself, squeeze myself, be proud of my journey, and that is what I want to encourage all of you to do.**

**SheAh Prince Eternal** is a transgender male artist, writer, performer, life coach, spiritual advisor and a shaman that conjures love, wellness, and diversity in all that he does.

**They didn't realize we were trying to be experimental and anti-theater. Magic happened on the stage, everybody would bring their A-game into the show. Whatever you wanted to present, in the best possible way, the way you wanted it to look, you would bring that to the stage, and the mix was the magic. And we were not result-oriented, a lot of people didn't understand that.**

**Fayette Hauser** is an artist, and writer who was a part of the celebrated Cockettes band. The beauty and bounty of drag, performance art, and rock n roll would collide every time Fayette got dressed.

**The fact that people accept me and understand who I am and what I am fighting for: fact that we exist.**

**Leon Mostovoy** is a transgender artist who has been creating on the front lines of the queer and political art movements for decades.

**I think it's important just to put your truth out there, wherever you are. Let people know your story... I think it's really important for old people to share their stories with others. When I was a youngster, I didn't have time for grandma either, you know? I was off and running but now that I am getting older, I am learning that we can really learn from one another, and generational education is really important.**

**Dolores DeLuce** is an artist, and writer who was a part of the celebrated Cockettes band. The beauty and bounty of drag, performance art, and rock n roll would collide every time Fayette got dressed.



Documentation of Oral Histories of Queer Resistance event at LACE. Top right image (left to right): Sheah Prince Eternal, Fayette Hauser, Leon Mostovoy and Dolores DeLuce.



Still image of INTÉNTAME music video by Xina Xurner featuring San Cha, 2018. Directed by Jacinto Astiazarán.

MC **Phermosa:** We asked Rudy Garcia, a Queer Latinx mover, shaker and organizer in LA to write and share with us a cute memory from the INTÉNTAME video shooting by Xina Xurner and San Cha at LACE as it was in full art studio swing.

## INTÉNTAME

by Rudy Garcia

An afternoon of fog machines, gyrating, pulling, pushing, laughing, making magic. That's how I remember the day on the set of the INTÉNTAME music video shoot.

I ran into Young at an event and they mentioned they wanted me to be in Xina Xurner's upcoming music video. The Virgo in me leaped out and began with the 21 questions. "When? Where? What do I have to do? Who else is in it?" Young let me know that it was for a track they completed with San Cha, and that it would be directed by Jacinto. They wanted me to be a daddy, (drawing reference to a look I sported at an event earlier that year). Leather hat. Leather jacket. Tiny faux leather undies and boots. I wondered "Would I wear a jock? Did I want to be half-naked in a music video?"

When I arrived and saw the large-scale cat playground that we would all be performing on, my thoughts ran wild about what the day had in store for us. Anna Luisa's dance routine that took place on the structure left us in awe. The video shooting day felt very special when it happened, as if we were being treated to something many others would not see. It was left on the cutting room floor.

A cylinder cage with Rafa Esparza rolling around, crashing into my shins. Pushing it back and forth, kicking it back and forth.

Grabbing Marvin from within a mob and dragging them throughout the playground.

The chaos of pulling Young across the cat tower sculpture and the excitement of it all.

The mom in me worried someone would get hurt.

Waking up the next morning bruised up with the joy of having been part of this queer utopia.

*Rudy "Bleu" Garcia is a 1st generation LA born and raised Chicano queer who is a mover, shaker, curator, zinester and organizer in Los Angeles.*



Behind the scenes documentation of the making of INTÉNTAME at LACE.



Behind the scenes documentation of the making of INTÉNTAME at LACE.

# THE BEAUTY CHRONICLES OF MUTANT SALON

**MC Phermosa:** This is a *mostly complete* chronology of Mutant Salon. Since its founding, they have held "un-formal" open hours and appointments (public and private), events and performances. Marvin gave numerous haircuts, Pooper (Elisa Harkins) delivered several tarot readings, and other members gave and received a ton of makeovers and beauty treatments to and from other artists, besties, close friends of besties. In Mutant Salon's early days, events were held in Young's studio at USC (2012-2014) and then relocated to other studios on the East side later on. Additionally, unique salon events have been organized at the studios and homes of other Mutant Salon members, where mutants would convene and queer the space across LA and internationally throughout the years.

- 2012** Mutant Salon was birthed  
Mutant Salon soft opening at the USC MFA building  
Beautython at the USC MFA building  
The beginning of Mutant Salon book club (first book: *Are You My Mother?* by Alison Bechdel)  
Beautython II, performances by Rind, Pooper, Sevlas at the USC MFA Gallery
- 2013** Mutant Salon at the LASH DTLA  
Mutant Salon party with Sister Mantos performance at the USC MFA building  
Mutant Salon at KCHUNG  
Salon Talk: A Conversation with Patrick Jackson (Article on badatsports.com)  
Mutant Salon performs for Halloween Party at Francois Ghebaly  
Salon Talk: A Conversation with Michael Ned Holte. (Article on badatsports.com)
- 2014** Mutant Salon at Mint Gallery, CalArts  
Mutant Salon: Who Are Worth Our Love at USC MFA Gallery  
Mutant Salon in Outfest Los Angeles LGBT Film Festival at REDCAT Gallery
- 2015** Resurrection Party at the Paradise Motel  
Beauty Sounds Now at CALARTS Open Studios  
Attack Sustain Release Decay in collaboration with Project Rage Queen and Experimental Half Hour at Honor Fraser Gallery  
Makeover at Southern Exposure (Oakland, CA)
- 2016** Exorcises with performances by Project Rage Queen, Jennifer Moon, and laub at the opening at Commonwealth & Council Gallery  
We Make Each Other Beautiful at the Broad Museum  
Sexy Beast L.A. for Planned Parenthood Los Angeles  
Festival de Las Muertas at the Hammer Museum



- 2018** CAVERNOUS: Young Joon Kwak and Mutant Salon at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions  
Out of Turn: Serendipity Arts Festival 2018 (Goa, India)
- 2019** Mulan, Make Up! Special screening and performance party with performances by Alice Cunt, Sarah Gail, Dalton Chase Goulette, Hausa, Anna Luisa Petrisko, Elliot Reed, TravisD. DJs: La Disco Es Qultura (Crasslos, Sister Mantos, xTimido) at Human Resources Los Angeles
- 2020** Mutant Salon Talks with EJ Hill, rafa esparza, Gordon Hall, and Julie Tolentino. (Michigan State University over Zoom)

Mutant Salon Event flyer board.

Founded by Young Joon Kwak & Marvin Astorga in 2012, Mutant Salon's past and current featured artists and collaborators include: Elisa Harkins (Pooper), Alli Miller, Kelly Akashi, Sarah Gail Armstrong, Jacinto Astiazaran, Lindsay August-Salazar, Dove Ayinde, Barf Queen, Black TED, Ciriza, Crasslos, Corazon Del Sol, La Disco Es Qultura, Lena Daly, rafa esparza & students from Occidental College, Experimental Half Hour (Eva Aguila and Brock Fansler), Edie Fake, Juan Gudiño, Orr Herz, Oree Holban, Jeffzilla, Amanda Joy, Julia Kouneski, laub, iia Ledesma, Oscar Ledesma, Fenex Lopez, Maxilla, Evan McCune, Veli Matti-Hoikka, Jennifer Moon, Roxy Morataya, David Muenzer, Thinh Nguyen (Long Long), Jasmine Nyende, John Olivo, Anna Luisa Petrisko, Project Rage Queen (Dalton Chase, Alice Cunt, Travis D, Vik Victorious), Elliot Reed, San Cha y Las Sirenas, Oscar Santos, Matt Savitsky, Barbara T. Smith, Jen Smith, Rachele Sawatsky, Martyna Szczesna, Rhea Tepp, TMO, Wampum (Elisa Harkins and Suzanne Kite), White Boy Scream (Micaela Tobin), Christopher Wawrinofsky, and Kim Ye, among others.

# EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

## CAVERNOUS (Section 1) Living Queer Archive

### Left Side

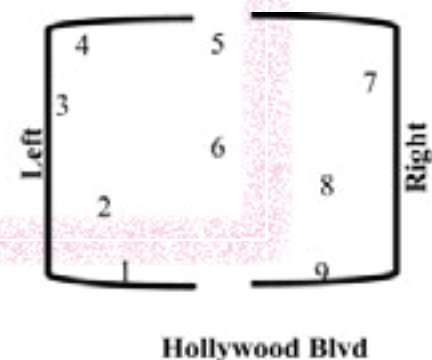
1. Young Joon Kwak  
*Pinwheel Vaginis*  
2017  
Ceramic  
Courtesy of the artist
2. Unknown  
*Untitled* (Phallic object)  
Unknown date  
Fiberglass, resine  
  
Unknown  
*Untitled* (dancing penis/vagina)  
1977  
Bronze on marble stone  
  
Unknown  
*Untitled* (Phallic teapot)  
Unknown Date  
Ceramic  
  
Unknown  
*Untitled* (4 Phallic Objects)  
Carved stone  
Unknown Date  
All Courtesy of the ONE  
Archives at the USC Libraries
3. Young Joon Kwak  
*Surveillance Mirror Vaginis*  
2018  
Convex acrylic security mirror,  
fiberglass resin, wood, silver  
leaf  
Courtesy of the artist
4. laub  
*The King Chair*  
2018  
Enema bag, wood, skim milk,  
towels, rubber gloves, baby  
wipes, petroleum jelly, white  
hat, fabric, buttons, paper  
towels, toilet paper  
Courtesy of the artist

### Center

5. Johanna Went  
*Knife boxing*  
22:40 min  
1980  
  
*On Klub*  
12:55 min  
1981  
  
*Hollywood Center Theater*  
6:08 min  
1981  
  
*New Wave Theater*  
6:09 min  
1980  
(Videos on hanging screen)  
Courtesy of the artist
6. Young Joon Kwak  
*Ceiling Vaginis Light Drip*  
2018  
LED neon rope, paint  
Courtesy of the artist  
  
Young Joon Kwak  
*Vaginis Chair*  
2018  
Wood, resin, velvet, foam,  
ceramic basin, cold-cast  
aluminum, soil, rocks, paint  
Courtesy of the artist  
  
Young Joon Kwak  
*Inverted Vaginis Masturbators*  
2018  
Cast resin, silver leaf  
Courtesy of the artist  
  
Young Joon Kwak  
*Vaginis Lamp*  
2018  
Cast hydrocal, cast  
pigmented resin, light cord  
with switch, light bulb  
Courtesy of the artist

### Right side

7. Young Joon Kwak  
*Hermaphroditus's Reveal III*  
2018  
Fiberglass resin, cast  
resin, pigmented epoxy  
clay, acrylic paint, silverleaf  
Courtesy of the artist
8. Young Joon Kwak  
*Vaginis Head Wig II – IV*  
2018  
Ceramic, paint, custom-made  
wig stylist Rosario Ribera from  
“Hollywood Wigs” owned by  
Christine & Ellen You  
Courtesy of the artist
9. Young Joon Kwak  
*Vaginis Wreath*  
2017  
Ceramic  
Courtesy of the artist  
  
**Building Facade**  
  
Young Joon Kwak  
*Preferred Pronouns*  
2018  
LED neon rope, plexiglass,  
cable ties  
Courtesy of the artist



## CAVERNOUS (Section 2) Mutant Salon:

1. Jacinto Astiazarán, *Dante's Crawlspace*, 2018, mix media.  
Courtesy of the artist.
2. Zine Library organized by Roxy Morataya, 2018. Courtesy of the artists.
3. Young Joon Kwak, *Brown Rainbow Eclipse Explosion*, 2017, cast aluminum, welded aluminum rods, resin, glass, mirror tiles, acrylic mirrors, epoxy putty, acrylic paint, motor, steel chain and hardware custom LED light, shadow. Courtesy of the artist.
4. Young Joon Kwak, *Mutant Salon Neon Sign*, 2012, neon acrylic case. Courtesy of the artist.
5. Juan Manuel Gudiño, *The aftermath*, 2018. Acrylic, tempera and ink on vinyl, spandex, plastic, paper and fabric. Courtesy of the artist.
6. Alli Miller, *Trash Can (Didn't We Almost Have it All)*, 2018, post-consumer waste, custom pedestal. Courtesy of the artist.
7. Anna Luisa Petrisko, *JEEP JEEP*, 2018, video game, painted pillows, pedestals and game console. Videogame collaboratively designed by collective “Free Nell,” that includes Anna Luisa Petrisko, Tonia Beglari (Browntourage), Bela Messer (Buddy System), and David Lyons (WITHIN).
8. Project Rage Queen (Alice Cunt, Dalton Chase Goulette, and Travis D), *Untitled*, 2018, installation, wigs, concrete shoes, wooden sculpture, spray paint, expanding foam, mask, paper, cardboard, LED lights. Courtesy of the artists.
9. Kim Ye, *Throw glitter, not shade*, 2018, found objects, fabric, paint. Courtesy of the artist.
10. Sarah Gail, *Hibernate*, 2018, fabric, chicken wire. Courtesy of artist.
11. Corazon Del Sol & Young Joon Kwak, *Spring*, 2018, fiberglass resin, fabric, pigments, water pump. Courtesy of artist.
12. Alli Miller & Long Long (Thinh Nguyen), *Trash Flag (Pussy), Trash Flag (Minge), Trash Flag (Cunt), Trash Flag (Twat), Trash Flag (Beef Curtain), Trash Flag (Hole), Trash Flag (Box), Trash Flag (Yay), Trash Flag (Pink Taco), Trash Flag (Noo Noo), Trash Flag (Kitty), Trash Flag (Venus Fly Trap), Trash Flag (Beaver)*, 2018, post-consumer waste, flags pole, hardware. Remnants from the performance *Guided Tour: an "Oral" History of Cavernous* by Long Long (Thinh Nguyen) and Alli Miller. Courtesy of artists.
14. Young Joon Kwak & Alli Miller, *Mutant Exorcise Rack*, 2016, steel, epoxy, clay, acrylic nails, paint, found objects (shake weight, hula hoop, stretch band, tennis ball). Courtesy of artists.
15. Young Joon Kwak & Alli Miller, *Mutant Salon: Exorcises*, 2016, HD video, 6:36 min. Courtesy of artists.
16. Dove Ayinde, *Video on Pedestal*, 2018, video. Courtesy of artist.
17. Erin Adams, *Drapery against wall*, 2018, canvas and paint. Courtesy of artist.
18. Videos selection: San Cha, *Capricho del Diablo*, 2018, 4:38 min; Sister Mantos, *Quéname*, 2013, 4:05 min; Restlust, *Fluctuating Love*, 2015, 2:23 min; Dorian Wood, *Corpulencia*, 2017, 4:42 min; Xina Xurner, *Gentle*, 2014, 6:44 min; Sarah Gail, *Racial Disparity and the Plight of the African American Female*, 2018, 3:31 min; Jeepneys, *In The Tree*, 2017, 3:47 min; The Uhuruverse, *Obey*, 2018, 3:24 min; Elliot Reed, *New Horse*, 2017, 2:09 min; Trap Girl, *Blastard*, 2017, 2:22 min; Micah James, *Said 2 Much*, 2014, 2:15 min; Xina Xurner, *Burn Slow*, 2015, 8:20 min; Sarah Gail, *Caress Me*, 2018, 3:32 min; The Uhuruverse X Niko Suki, *BASIC ASS FAKE WHITE BYTCH (B.A.F.W.B.)*, 2017, 4:35 min; Project Rage Queen, *Affliction: Episode 1*, 2014, 5:39 min; The Bedroom Witch, *Closure*, 2017, 4:41 min; Eddington Again, *Masturgrape*, 2015, 4:20 min; Xina Xurner, *Poppers*, 2013, 4:06 min; Dove Ayinde, *Evening*, 2018, 5:34 min. Courtesy of the artists.
19. Alli Miller, *Trash Can (Trash)*, 2018, post-consumer waste, custom pedestal. Courtesy of artist.
20. Alli Miller, *Mutant Salon Shoe Rack*, 2016, post-consumer waste, hair extensions, tennis balls. Courtesy of artist.
21. Young Joon Kwak, *Mutant Tool Caddy*, 2014-2016, wood, found objects, glazed ceramic, vessels, nail, polish, makeup, beauty tools. Courtesy of artist.

# MUTANT SALON ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

To read the full bios, visit the LACE website

**Young Joon Kwak** is an LA-based multi-disciplinary artist working primarily through sculpture, performance, video, and collaboration. Their work aims to change how we view our bodies by reimagining their form, functionality, and materiality—from static and bound to pre-inscribed power structures, to an expanded sense of bodies and their environs as mutable and open-ended. She is the founder of Mutant Salon, a roving beauty salon/platform for experimental performance collaborations with her community of queer, trans, femme, POC artists and performers, and she is the lead performer in the electronic-dance-noise band Xina Xurner.

**Marvin Astorga** is an LA-based artist and musician. Marvin is one half of the electronic dance/noise duo Xina Xurner, and a member of Mutant Salon. Marvin explores queerness, Xicanismo, and transformation through sound and electronics.

**Jacinto Astiazarán** was awarded the USC International Artist Fellowship and received an MFA in Fine Art from USC in 2015. Recent exhibitions include *Fantasies and Fallacies for Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*. Selected works are archived at Associação Cultural Videobrasil, Sao Paulo and UCLA Film and Television Archive's Legacy Project, Los Angeles.

**Dove Ayinde** is a musician/artist in Los Angeles, CA. Themes of Black consciousness, social justice, and identity can be found throughout her work in zines, live performances, and in her collage art. Amongst various projects, she currently performs in post-garage band, Hausa.

**Alice Cunt** is (for a lack of a better word) DEAD, and only large sums of money can raise her from the grave. Alice Cunt did work on the cavernous project, contributing sculpture and bodily kinesthetic intelligence.

**TravisD:** (travesty): (1.) a grotesque or debased likeness or imitation. (2.) a multi-plus performer creator b\*tch.

**Sarah Gail** “Multifaceted in every sense of the word, Gail speaks to her current state of being and desires and ambitions through her work. Be it in written form, painting, performance or an installation, we the audience are able to tell how she is coping with existing as a Black femme within a white patriarchal supremacist world. Her work is sincere in ways that most artists will never be able to create and blunt in a manner that many do not know how to create without victimizing.”

— Brandon Drew Holmes

**Dalton Chase Goulette** is a multimedia/performance artist based in Los Angeles. Their work focuses on post-apocalyptic visions of the future, queering classical ideas of beauty and deterioration of self/ego/gender/. Dalton's aspiration is to one day generate ectoplasm. Dalton will be alongside Project Rage Queen traveling through LACE for an indiscriminate amount of time in sculptural pieces they designed for the opening night.

**Juan Manuel Gudiño** is a Mexican artist that resides in Los Angeles who highlights strong traits in abstraction with painting, sculpture and installation. Gudiño has been in past collaborations with Los Angeles Chicano artists such as Maricon Collective and participated with rafa esparza's Con/Safos at The Bowtie Project.

**laub** is an artist living and working in Los Angeles using glass, ceramics, sculpture, video, drawing, performance, and music. He pulls traditions from an idealist, southern, Christian upbringing and meshes this with a colorful, queer, angst to construct and deconstruct patterns of Utopia. laub graduated with an MFA in Glass from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2012 and with a BFA in Craft/Material studies from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2008. He studied Design at Bornholm School of Glass and Ceramics in Denmark in 2009.



Young Joon Kwak, *Queer Hollywood*, drawing, 2018.

**Long Long (Thinh Nguyen)** reclaimed superego from childhood memories growing up as a girl. Nguyen is known for their intense controversial contemporary art performances. More recently with Long Long, heart wrenching vocal and throat singing performances have gained critical attention from the music and art communities for their remarkable voice and politically charged lyrics. Long Long is a first-generation immigrant from Vietnam, and currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

**Roxy Morataya** is an ever curious Latinx zinester and artist from Santa Monica, CA. Inspired by American cartoons from the 1990s, street fashion and the Fat Acceptance movement, Roxy uses “Full-Figure” drawings and zines as tools to dismantle stigmas against mental health, true body diversity (that is disabled, fat, all skin tone inclusive), LGBTQIA+ and Genderqueer representation.

**Anna Luisa Petrisko** is an interdisciplinary artist working in experimental opera, video art, body-based sculpture, and immersive media. Her work explores future and ancient ideas at a non-linear tempo, creating built environments that are as much invested in the sacred as they are in technological speculation. As a faculty member in the Art, Media, and Design department at California State University San Marcos, she teaches courses in Video Art and Sound Design. As a faculty member in the Art, Media, and Design department at California State University San Marcos, she teaches courses in Video Art and Sound Design.

**Matt Savitsky aka Minty** (b. 1982), is a multi-disciplinary performance artist who lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his MFA from UC San Diego in 2015 and his BFA from The Cooper Union in 2005. His video works have been screened in various programs, including Migrating Forms Film Festival (NY) and have been shown internationally in the Galeria Alternativa Once in Monterrey, Mexico and the Universidad del País Vasco Bilbao, Spain (2014).

**Corazon Del Sol** is a third generation Los Angeles-based artist. Informally taught by her early access to the arts and subsequent questioning of the arts' organizing systems, she has a practice rooted in collective sense making through conversation, movement, video, sculpture, and other experimental modes.

**Kim Ye** (b. 1984, Beijing, China) is a Los Angeles-based interdisciplinary artist whose work incorporates performance, installation, video, and sculpture. Her work traces the circulation of power by exploring concepts of labor, intimacy, and the exchange between an artist and their audience. She received her MFA from UCLA (2012) and her BA from Pomona College (2007).



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## "It's going to be epic!"

That was the affirmation artist Young Joon Kwak shared with me back in 2018 after our first meeting at LACE with Mutant Salon. And indeed, it was epic in many senses. CAVERNOUS is a grandiose artistic experiment that unfolds in many poetic forms, becoming a moment that marked LACE history. It was a platform that strengthened our QBIPOC artist community. It feels heroic—in a more femme, warm and addictive way—many heroines and trans-heroes were and continue to be part of this long and ever-expanding collective narrative. This book is an extension of the Living Queer Archive that Young proposed for CAVERNOUS, as well as a visual assemblage of memories, conversations and confessions from Mutant Salon that combined different times and spaces. It took us four years (including a brutal Pandemia) to make this beautiful compilation of mutant voices designed by the incredibly talented designer, Travis Read-Davidson, a member of Mutant Salon and Project Rage Queen. Thank you to the text contributors Rudy Garcia and Bradford Nordeen for their memories and to Anuradha Vikram for her critical interpretation of CAVERNOUS.

The Mutant Salon conversations around the publication were recorded first in 2018 and then in 2022. The conversations were carefully transcribed, edited, fragmented, and woven back into this book that you are holding now. I am fortunate to have co-edited this book with my friend, colleague and ahijadix Juan Silverio, who also contributed with an imaginary phantom queen, Phermosa, who guided us around the conversations.

CAVERNOUS was, is and will forever be epic because of the amazing guidance, generosity and audacity of artist Young Joon Kwak and the artistic sparks that each member of Mutant Salon lit into the project. LACE is grateful to have shared space with Young Joon Kwak, Marvin Astorga, Jacinto Astiazarán, Dove Ayinde, Corazon Del Sol, Sarah Gail, Juan Manuel Gudiño, laub, Long Long (Thin Nguyen), Alli Miller, Roxy Morataya, Project Rage Queen (Alice Cunt, Dalton Chase Goulette, and TravisD), Matt Savitsky, Kim Ye, Rosario Ribera, Anna Luisa Petrisko with Tonia B., Bela Messex and David Lyons. Special thanks to Johanna Went for her inspirational bomb work in CAVERNOUS, as well as the unknown artists featured in the Living Queer Archive from the ONE Archive at the USC Libraries. I want to celebrate the artists involved in the incendiary Black TED project that brought an unforgettable night organized by Sarah Gail and Dove Ayinde, and included the participation of Brandon Drew Holmes, Micah James, and Elliot Reed. A special note for this group whose community got targeted by the racist and anti-black Hollywood police right in front of LACE. Your resilience is a reminder of the everyday work we all still have to do to transform our world. Bradford Nordeen and Dirty Looks: On Location organized with Young and Marvin, Oral Histories of Queer Resistance that gathered the wonderful artists and activists Dolores DeLuce, Fayette Hauser, Leon Mostovoy, and SheAh Prince Eternal, with the collaboration of the LGBTQ Center. The zine workshop inside the guts of CAVERNOUS was made possible through our partnership with My Friend's place and facilitation from Sarah Gail, Dove Ayinde and Roxy Morataya. The magic of the closing night wouldn't have been possible without the performances of Xina Xurner and SanCha, Project Rage Queen with Mark Golanco, Ciriza, as well as beats from DJ collective La Disco es Cultura.

To arrive at CAVERNOUS, LACE first had to be a massive collective artist studio, but then also a music video shoot set! The fog-filled fantasy of Inténtame by Xina Xurner and SanCha was enchanting, fueled by the creative work of Jacinto Astiazarán (Film Director), Abigail Collins (Director of Photography), Baby Shamu, Rudy Bleu, Jackie Castillo, Lorenzo del Castillo, rafa esparza, Sebastian Hernandez, Bashir Naim, Anna Luisa Petrisko, Elliot Reed, Rhea Tepp, Marvin Astorga, Young Joon Kwak, Evelia Magallon



(Fabricator), Alli Miller (Title Designer), Jackie Castillo, Israel Cedillo, Jinseok Choi, Dash Fu, Natalie Marsh, Krystal Ramirez, and Rui Xu (Production Assistants).

I want to thank former Exhibitions and Operations Manager Andrew Freire who was in charge of this fantastic production and led an amazing team of energetic apprentices: Jackie Castillo and Krystal Ramirez (2018 Getty Marrow Interns), Jinseok Choi, Zehao Fu, Israel Cedillo, Natalie Marsh, Rui Xu, Jennifer Baltazar, Ellen Joo, Beatrice Petropoulos-White, Renee Lung, Serena Sampson, Yinchun Niu, and Nestor Guerrero (2020 Getty Marrow Intern).

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Finally, I am grateful to LACE's present and past team members for their hard work and support of this femme-nomenal presentation being written into LACE's history. I will always remember the day of the closing.

**Daniela Lieja Quintanar**  
LACE Chief Curator and Director  
of Programming (2016-2022)

Daniela Lieja Quintanar and Young Joon Kwak in front of *Preferred Pronouns* (2018) during summer 2019. Photo by Brennen Perry.

