

KIOSK

Rebecca Adorno, Javier Bosques, Danny Rivera-Cruz, Chaveli Sifres
Curated by Guillermo Rodríguez
Supported by Artists Alliance Inc

On View Sep 9 - Nov 19, 2022
Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space

Education Materials

Exhibition Overview

Tracing parallels between La Placita in Santurce, Puerto Rico, and Essex Market in Manhattan, the artists playfully explore notions of memory, indulgence, and joy.

About KIOSK

KIOSK at Essex Market is a continuation of the conversation on charm and poetry found in familiar day-to-day sceneries that started at El Lobi, a former hotel lobby in Santurce, and Produce Model Gallery, a former Laundromat in Chicago. In this iteration, the exhibition and its artists incorporate smell, sight, and sound to invite the audience into the Puerto Rico of their memories to share with them the marvel and affection hidden in banality.

Reference Terms

Banal: ba·nal
/bə'nāl,bə'nal/

Adjective: so lacking in originality as to be obvious and boring.

Kiosk: ki·osk
/'kē,äsk/

Noun: kiosk; plural noun: kiosks

a small open-fronted hut or cubicle from which newspapers, refreshments, tickets, etc., are sold.

About the Curator

Guillermo Rodríguez (b. 1986, San Juan) studied fine arts and sculpture at the University of Puerto Rico. He completed a Bachelor of Art (Honors) in Art Practice at Goldsmiths College, University of London in 2010 and attended a Master's program in Curating Visual Arts at Universidad Nacional Tresde Febrero in Argentina. He has participated in the Rauschenberg Foundation Residency, the Banff Centre Visual Arts Residency, inaugurated the The Davidoff Arts Initiative Residency in Basel, and exhibited in the 11th Havana Biennial: *Práctica Artísticas e Imaginarios Sociales*, *Artesur: Collective Fictions* at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), *Final del Juego* at Fundación Proa (Buenos Aires) and *Entre Formas* at Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico. As part of his fellowship with Beta-Local in 2016, he founded and directed the transitory exhibition platform *La Estacion Espacial*. Rodríguez has recently curated *Herbaria* at Centro de Desarrollo

de las Artes Visuales in la Habana, CROMÁNTICA de Chaveli Sifre, Balancing a Blade on Diamond Grass (Balancing a Diamond on a Blade of Grass) at El Lobi, in San Juan and KIOSK at Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space in New York. He is currently ICI's 2022 Curatorial Research Fellow.

About the Artists

Rebecca Adorno's work stems from a research-based approach rooted in her background in Engineering and Fine Arts. By recontextualizing scientific data, technology, and concepts involving physics of sound, Adorno creates physical representations of intangible phenomena while drawing parallels between aesthetics of beauty and lethality: signs and poetic contents that arise when catastrophic events, such as climate change, show flashes of sublime beauty. Adorno lives and works in NYC.



Javier Bosques (b. 1985, San Juan, Puerto Rico) is a visual artist with a multidisciplinary practice working on concepts related to time perception, memory, and the construction of narratives. Bosques earned a BFA from The Cooper Union in New York City in 2008 and holds an MFA in film directing from UCLA in Los Angeles (2015). Bosques has recently exhibited at Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, San Juan, 2021; Storefront for Art and Architecture, NYC, 2019; Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2018; LAXART, LA, 2017; Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, Chicago, 2017 and Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales, La Habana 2017 among other institutions. Bosques lives and works from his studio in Río Grande, Puerto Rico.



Danny Rivera-Cruz is an artist and designer from Bayamón, Puerto Rico. Through a variety of mediums that include installation, mixed media, painting, and video, Rivera-Cruz's practice looks to re-interpret materials and images creating combinations that revolve around the flexibility of memory, image trajectories, obsession, and the spectator's role in the creation of meaning. Rivera-Cruz completed his BFA in Image & Design from E.A.P in 2010 and an MFA in Painting and illustration from Brooklyn College in 2014. Rivera-Cruz lives and works in Santurce, PR.



Chaveli Sifre (b. 1986, Germany) researches healing practices, the sense of smell, botany, collectivity, and belief systems. Her practice seeks to generate relationships of affection and rehabilitate our sensorial perception. Encompassing installations, objects, paintings, and performative rituals, Sifre's work explores intersensorial entanglement as knowledge production. She believes understanding the relation between somatic processes, intangible heritage, and scientific knowledge is a necessary part of the decolonization process. Perceptual processes inform the systems of value in a particular society, this awareness exposes us to difference and may serve as a method for dismantling otherness. Sifre lives and works in Berlin, DE.



Recommended Questions for Discussion

Before Your Visit

Where are some places you go very often? What does the environment look and sound like? Are there any scents that you connect to this place?

What do you feel when you think about these places?

During Your Visit

What about the artwork expresses “banal” qualities?

What does the artwork make you feel?

Does the artwork remind you of anything you have seen, smelled, or heard before?

After Your Visit

How has your perception of “banality” changed?

Looking back at the first question from before your visit, has the way you feel about these places changed?

If so, how?

Artist Narratives

Rebecca Adorno

My artistic practice is motivated by the context in which I was born and raised: Puerto Rico, which is at the epicenter of both climate change and political upheaval fueled by centuries of colonialism. In my work I seek to subtly question the perception of our ever-evolving socio-political landscape by highlighting instances where it is possible to perceive, and in some way account for, ungraspable phenomena such as sound generated through and in the aftermath of hurricanes, underwater noise and other forms of aural contamination, as well as our emotional attachment to physical objects and nostalgia for better times. In general, I gravitate towards the creation of physical representations of these types of intangible phenomena under the guise of magical realism or a type of social science fiction.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CkMDfEpu3bU/>

...

One day I was browsing Facebook Marketplace to see what interesting “materials” I could find. I stumbled upon an obscure listing of some matte black pipes. I clicked on it and the description read “wind chime pipes. Free. Call for delivery”. So I called, an older sounding man picked up and I inquired about the pipes. He said he needed to get rid of them and that he could mail them to me. Two days later I received the pipes in the mail. I started doing some research about these matte black wind chime pipes and found out that is the type of pipe used in Memorial Wind Chimes to commemorate the loss of a loved one at their final resting place. They tend to be tuned to the note of C and resonate at 440 Hz to give a sense of calm to visitors at cemeteries. I also found out that there’s a tradition in different cultures, to hang a wind chime outside one’s house after a loved one has died so that every time you hear it chime it’s a reminder that they are close by. So, naturally, I called the man who sent me the chimes to ask if he had lost someone. To my surprise, his phone was disconnected. I never heard back from him. And this is why I’m starting to think that I collaborated on this piece with a ghost.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CkRIkBaOHLA/>

Javier Bosques

Puerto Rican suburbia stands as part of this sociopolitical paradox: rich in aesthetic syncretism and malleable symbolism.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CjnjTteMQrL/>

...

Extension Familiar is a collaboration with my mother Elba Meléndez where I asked her to model houses under construction in ceramic. The first houses were made referencing structures around our neighborhood in Río Grande Puerto Rico, later from memory, and ultimately assembling her own designs from imagination. Houses with unfinished additions are common and can be seen throughout the Island. Some are slowly built as money comes, but most appear to be halted projects abandoned as the family’s economy

shifts. The unfinished stacks of cinder blocks on top of the original structures are symbolic crowns of hope and disillusion. A prosperous impulse originated out of necessity confronted with a more austere reality.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CkIcg8WLzbD/>

Danny Rivera-Cruz

The lion figure and the pipe/concrete bucket hold each other close in material quality and scale. Both casted objects suggest direction and impediment, a liminal attempt to extend ownership and access. The lioness figures lack detail, they stand directly in contact with the ground, maybe your street; no podium-like plate under them, just an exhausted mold and a PVC pipe urging for position, held together from one point to another with a rope. Moveable yet unyielding.

Conjugating these two objects as one seemed organic as I build each as servile. These objects are gifted with a certain poetic modesty as they are perpetually conditioned by transit and pre-existing structures. Just like the glass block structures [in the exhibition], these objects find themselves echoing the DIY practice of improvements with modular pre-fabricated materials, aesthetically conformed and presented in ownership as middle-class achievements and/or architectural embellishments.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CjtN3aRLWnB/>

Chaveli Sifre

Sometimes it seems like science has discovered everything, but we're still not 100% sure how smell works. I started working with smell very intuitively, I wanted to address memory, I wanted the tease of a perfume only accessible through its description, like when one reads a recipe or a poem. This relationship mirrors the way we recall scents, like a spirit of the past that eludes us. Smell is like falling in love, the kind of love that yearns for possession, when we smell something, particles of the smell source enter our body, it is, in essence, an act of consumption. The history of smell is also the story of perfumery. The first eau de cologne was created by an Italian immigrant in the city of Cologne, Germany, he missed the fragrant breeze of his native land (so do I). Coconut Bombs is a very playful sculpture, conceptually the eau de cologne refers to Puerto Rico's own colonial hex, the fragrant tinctures are simultaneously aromatic and medicinal, revealing medicine's and perfumery's conjoint origin, while the addition of chloroform transforms the mixture into an anesthetic, a toxicant that obliterates logic and action.

Coconut Bombs were born out of an image, a mystical image, they have since then continued to amass meaning, I keep finding purpose in them through and associations and recollections. I understand them as a sort of fragrant portrait of Puerto Rico.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj5nrkir71v/>

...

Untitled, Enfleurance is a work that employs coconut fat, cacao butter, and azucenas (tuberose), it refers to a traditional scent extraction method, centering the process as a final work. Essentially it is wall intervention with fat, a sort of olfactory portrait that refers to encaustic paintings, archeological sediments, and intangible heritages. It connects the Essex Market to La Placita in Puerto Rico, generating a social space for kinship, joy, and collective remembering of home.

https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj_We6qOI-l/

Accessibility Information

Visitors Who Are Deaf or Partially Hearing

While most of the exhibit can be enjoyed without the accompaniment of audio (there are no narrative pieces that require closed captioning), one of the artworks by Rebecca Adorno includes a turntable with playable vinyl records for visitors to use. Rebecca Adorno's pieces *Underwater ambient noise no. 1* and *Underwater ambient noise no. 2* use sound to contrast between the atmospheric soundscape of the market space in Puerto Rico and the underwater ambient noise at the same location. With the exception of this specific artwork which relies exclusively on sound, we hope that the visitors can enjoy the rest of the exhibit's visual, tactile, and olfactory works.

Facility Accessibility

Baby strollers are welcome in Both Essex Market and Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space. Both facilities are wheelchair accessible, and service animals on a leash are permitted.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about accessing Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space or attending programs, please contact Jodi Waynberg at jodi@artistsallianceinc.org or call 212-420-9202.

Restrooms

Restrooms for visitors are located on the second floor of Essex Market, which is accessible via elevator or stairs.

Visitors on the Autism Spectrum

The current exhibition gallery includes the main room and a smaller room that can be accessed through the opening in the left-hand corner of the gallery. Both spaces include large street-facing windows. In the gallery, there are artworks that implement visual, auditory, tactile, and olfactory interactions.

Please refer to the pages below for a visual guide to accessing Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space:

Visual Guide: Accessing Cuchifritos Gallery

Hello, today we will be going to visit the Cuchifritos Gallery in Essex Market at 88 Essex Street in New York City. Walking down the street, you may be able to recognize us! At Artists Alliance Inc., we show contemporary artworks by new and emerging artists.



Our Cuchifritos gallery is located inside Essex Market, where there are a lot of shops indoors. This means that there are many people walking and touring the shops, as well as the people who run them. You will most likely hear the sounds of chopping from the vendor’s food prep, the smell of food, and the voices of people talking and interacting with the stores. It is a comfortable social space, and entering our gallery is just as open and welcoming.

This is the entrance to the Essex Market facing Broome Street between Essex and Norfolk streets. Before entering, we should put on our masks!



Once we enter through the glass doors, we should head to the right. We can check if we're heading in the right direction by following the vendors: Top Hop, Peasant Stock, Puebla Mexican Food, Cafe D'Avignon, Dominican Cravings, and Zerza (in that order). Once you hit Zerza, you can take a left turn and we should be right next to the gallery!



Now, we can enter the gallery through the glass doors (which are always open during visiting hours!). There will be someone at the desk to greet you, but we can freely walk around the space to see what we like. On the desk are two stacks of paper: one with the names of the Curator and Artists of the show and one that provides the titles of and materials in the work on view. We can take these with us to better understand the artwork.

Something you might notice as you walk in is the unique scent.



The scent comes from the work of art on the left side of the room, where we can see *Untitled (Enfleurage)* by Chaveli Sifre. If we step closer, we can smell the tuberose flowers. If the scent gets overwhelming, it's okay. We can take a few steps back and take a quick break outside before we explore the rest of the gallery.



Right next to the piece we just saw is a turntable mounted onto a wall. This is an interactive activity where we get to play and listen to vinyl records by Rebecca Adorno! We must be very careful with the turntable. If you want to give the vinyl a listen, we can go ask the person at the desk to set it up. Then, once everything is in place, you can put on the headphones. The sound might be too loud or too low, so we can twist the dial to the left and lower the volume or to the right to make it louder.



There's also another artwork with sound on the other side of the wall. This work, *Inducción de palomas a estado de hipnosis* is by Javier Bosques. On the screen, we can watch the flock of pigeons ruffling their feathers and standing with trance-like stillness. If you would like, we can listen through the headphones and experience the audio work that the artist created for the video. Unlike the turntable, we can't adjust the volume ourselves, so we can ask our friend at the desk to lower or raise the volume. Sometimes the sound of birds and other background noises in the video and the moving birds can feel like too much, so when that happens, we can gently remove the headphones and place them back on their hook and continue watching the pigeons or move on to the next artwork.



After looking around the main room, we can enter through this doorway into a smaller room.



We've discovered Rebecca Adorno's second interactive work, *Untitled (Windchime)*! You can touch the metal pipes, and we can listen to them as they ring and resonate in the room. It might get a little too loud sometimes, and when that happens, we can either exit the small space or gently stop them with our hands before trying again.



Guide to the Bathrooms

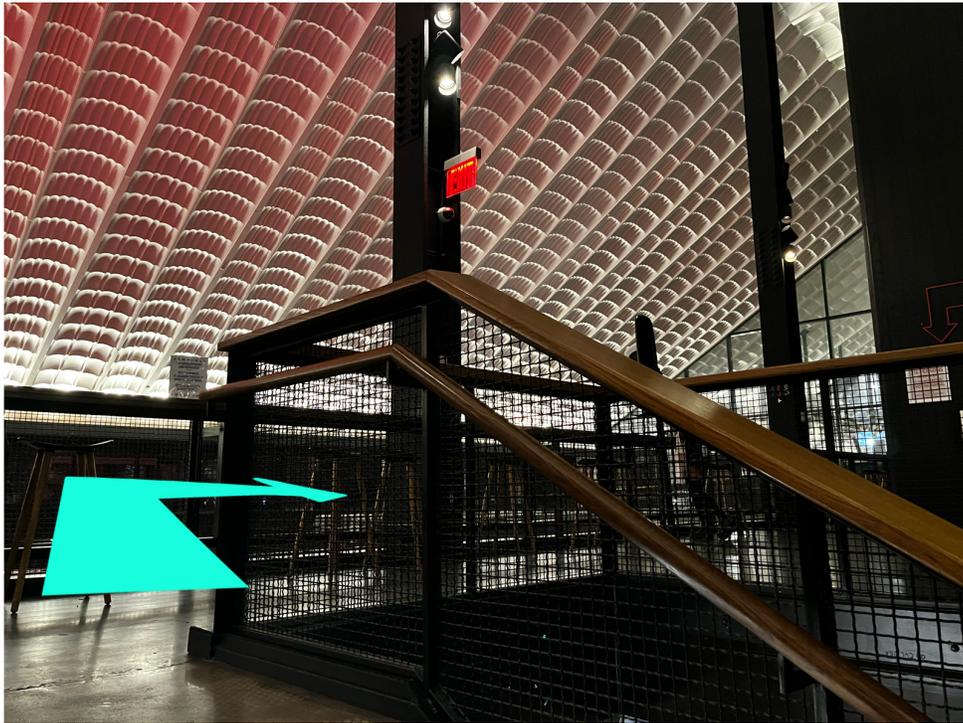
To enter the bathrooms, we can head back toward the entrance we came through in the very beginning. Just beyond that, we should be able to see a staircase leading up to the mezzanine. We can walk up these, or...



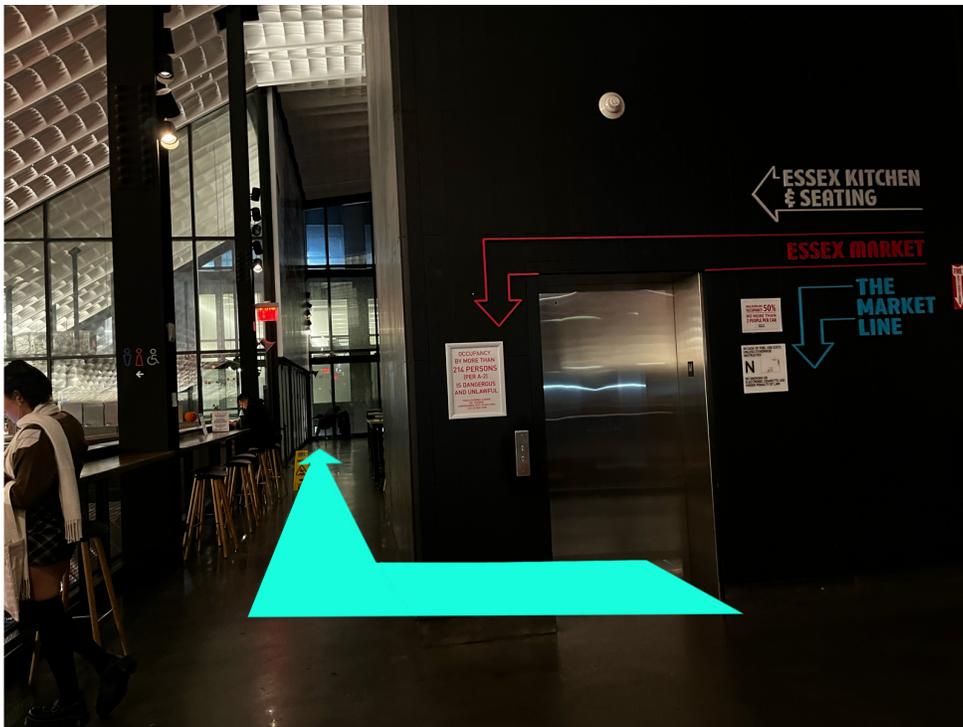
We can use the elevators, which you might have noticed on the right side when we first entered the market.



If we took the stairs up to the mezzanine, we can head toward the right.



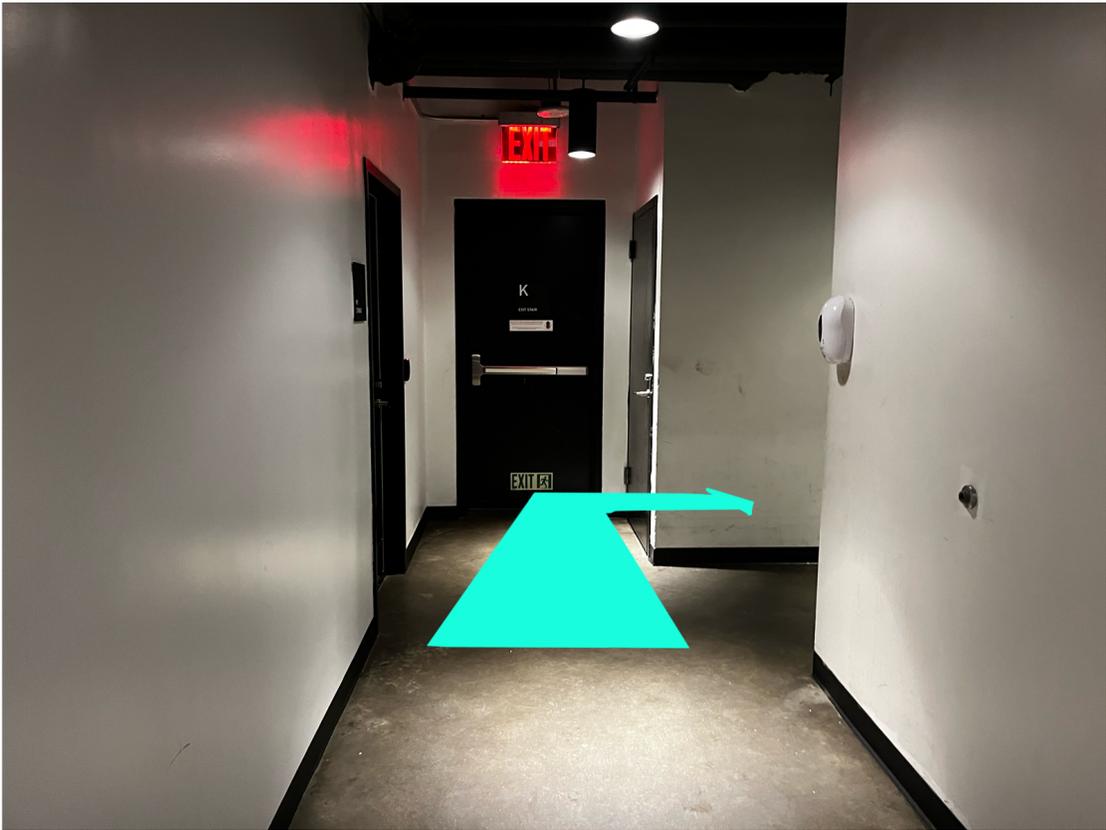
If we took the elevator, we should make two right turns



Then, we should keep walking along the counters and stools to the left, until we see a long, declining ramp. We can follow it straight down until we reach the end of it by the multiple doors and a glowing exit sign overhead.



Once we reach this area, you can take a right turn toward the hand sanitizer dispenser.



There are the bathrooms! The one on the left with red is for women, and the one on the right with blue is for men. To use them, you will need to put in the bathroom code: 80220#



When we're ready to leave, we can exit through the gallery doors and retrace our steps to the large glass doors of the market. Or you can explore the rest of the amazing Essex Market shops and installments as well!

I hope we can meet again at the Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space.

