

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Locust Projects presents
MAIN GALLERY:
DANIEL ALMEIDA &
ADRIAN RIVERA:
The Elephant Never Forgets

Exhibition Dates:
September 7 – November 2, 2024

Opening Event
Saturday, September 7, 2024
6-8pm, Meet the Artists

Closing Event
Saturday, November 2, 2024
12-5pm, Swap Shop and Makers Mart

Public Hours:
Wednesday to Saturday
11am – 5pm

MEDIA CONTACT:
communications@locustprojects.org
305-576-8570

Press kit and images:
[Available here](#)

Also on view:

PROJECT ROOM:
LIZN'BOW: *Niñalandia*
Both shows open September 7 |
6-8pm and features performance by
LizN'Bow at 8pm

Daniel Almeida & Adrian Rivera
The Elephant Never Forgets

Nostalgia, identity, and the pervasive influence of media across borders found in an uncanny backstage TV studio lot inspired by 1970s sitcom "El Chavo del Ocho"



Daniel Almeida & Adrian Rivera: *backdrop for The Elephant Never Forgets, courtesy of the artists*

[Miami, FL] Locust Projects presents *The Elephant Never Forgets*, a major multimedia installation in the form of an uncanny backstage TV studio lot by Daniel Arturo Almeida (b. 1992, Caracas, Venezuela) and Adrian Edgard Rivera (b. 1991, Austin, Texas) opening on Saturday, September 7, 2024 with a Meet the Artist Reception from 6-8pm.

Drawing from 'la vecindad,' the iconic setting of the 1970s sitcom 'El Chavo del Ocho,'¹ and other historical and contemporary references from the artists' experience of a Mexican and Venezuelan mass media, the immersive installation traces Latin American media history to lay bare the socio-political intricacies of memory through themes of transnational telecommunications, piracy as access/agency, the public broadcast theatrics of authoritarianism, constructed memories, and soft power.

The title of the exhibition, "The Elephant Never Forgets," is inspired by the third song on side B of Jean-Jacques Perrey's 1970 album *Moog Indigo*.



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This playful electronic adaptation of Beethoven's "Turkish March" was famously used without authorization as the opening theme for 'El Chavo,' the most watched sitcom in Mexican television history, and still airing today in syndication cementing it as an iconic and unmistakable sound across Latin America and the Spanish-speaking world, including the United States.

The installation invites visitors to enter a TV production studio set filled with screens, costumes, props and set dressings. Suspended from the ceiling, a mass of bootleg marionettes with iconic faces populate the space. An industrial metal puppet theater "castelet," armored with counterfeit national decorations, frames a hologram. A grouping of monitors tune in footage of a broadcast performance from varying camera angles undressing the manipulative choreography of televised state ceremonies of power. Large photo backdrops cascade down from a towering wall of scaffolding. Spread throughout the gallery, and three oversized heads of El Chavo characters allude to a contentious dispute over copyright and ownership. On the opposite side of the scaffolding is an intimate space, filled with a collection of photos, books, small objects and familial paraphernalia, among them a couch shining in the glow of a TV set displaying footage from 1990s anti-piracy commercials.

Deep economic inequalities and censorship have historically limited access to media, leading to piracy as a way to bypass exclusionary paywalls and state-controlled narratives. In many countries in the region, a volatile economy made a single DVD or video game worth more than a week's salary. Piracy provided agency and became a transformative force, allowing people to remix and escape the oversaturation of foreign media. Fansubs and other grassroots efforts contributed to this cultural exchange. While the issue of piracy raises questions of ownership and authenticity, in the face of cultural flattening, the counterfeit often becomes more authentic than the original.

Almeida and Rivera's set is a platform where the artists reminisce and reflect upon their respective biographical journeys linked by fragmented memories and layered experiences of a bygone era in Latin American media consumption.

¹ El Chavo del 8 is a Mexican situational comedy television series created by and starring Roberto Gómez Bolaños and produced by Televisión Independiente de México (later, Televisa). El Chavo first appeared in 1971 as a sketch on a Mexican show called Chespirito. It officially ended in 1980. Syndicated episodes existed until 1992 and was broadcast across all of Latin America, Brazil, Spain and the United States with an approximate audience of around 350 million people per episode across the Americas. [LINK](#)

RELATED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Little Haiti Little River Art Days

Saturday, October 19 | 12-5pm

Highlighting arts and culture offerings in the neighborhood on a quarterly basis

Closing Event

Saturday, November 2, 2024

12-5pm, Swap Shop and Makers Mart

Visitors are invited to purchase elements from the show as well as peruse wares from Miami makers and creatives.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Daniel Arturo Almeida, a Miami-based artist of Venezuelan descent, has cultivated a notable presence in the art world with an M.F.A. from the School of Visual Arts, NY, and a summa cum laude B.F.A. from Florida International University, Miami, FL. His work has garnered significant recognition, including a Curatorial Fellowship at NYU's Latinx Project and a membership at the NEW INC, New Museum, NY. Almeida's artistic narrative unfolds through a series of solo and group exhibitions, reflecting his nuanced exploration of identity and memory. His solo debut at Florida International University, curated by Mirta Gómez del Valle, set a profound precedent for his career. He has since contributed to various impactful group shows, such as "Dread/Dream" at SVA Chelsea Galleries and

"Glow in the Dark" at A.I.R. Gallery, Brooklyn, asserting his voice within contemporary dialogues. Beyond his artistic practice, Almeida engages in curatorial projects and art pedagogy, shaping art discourse and nurturing emerging talents. His role in projects like "An Inward Sea: Oral History" and teaching at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, underscores his commitment to community engagement and art education in Miami.

Adrián Edgard Rivera, born in 1991 in Austin, Texas, and raised in Yautepec de Zaragoza, Morelos, Mexico, is a contemporary artist who currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Rivera's artistic journey is marked by a series of thought-provoking exhibitions, including recent showcases at Black Brick Project and Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery in New York. His work delves into themes of identity, culture, and memory, as seen in his solo exhibition at Plexus Projects and participation in various curated group shows across prominent New York venues. Rivera's commitment to his craft has been recognized through residencies and awards, notably at The New Museum's NEW INC program and Plexus Projects. Beyond his visual art practice, Rivera engages with the art community through lectures and talks, sharing his insights and experiences at institutions like the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami and Northern Michigan University, fostering dialogues that bridge art and technology.

The artists extend their gratitude to artist Itzel Basualdo for her critical role and contributions in the early conceptual development of "The Elephant Never Forgets."

The Elephant Never Forgets was selected from online Open Call for the Main Gallery in 2021 from more than 280 applicants online and was coordinated by Locust Projects' artist co-founder Elizabeth Withstandley. The 2021 Main



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Gallery Open Call review panel included: past exhibiting artists Shikeith (2019) and Juana Valdes (2020) and Aldeide Delgado, founder and director of WOPHA (Women Photographers International Archive).

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national, and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2023-2024 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children's Trust; Dede and Robert Moss; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; Diane and Werner Grob; Susan and Richard Arregui; The Korean Arts Management Service; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, The Berkowitz Contemporary Foundation; Funding Arts Network; Kirk Foundation; Cowles Charitable Trust, Miami Salon Group, and the Incubator Fund Supporting Sponsors and Friends.

The Elephant Never Forgets is supported in part by Funding Arts Network.



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