

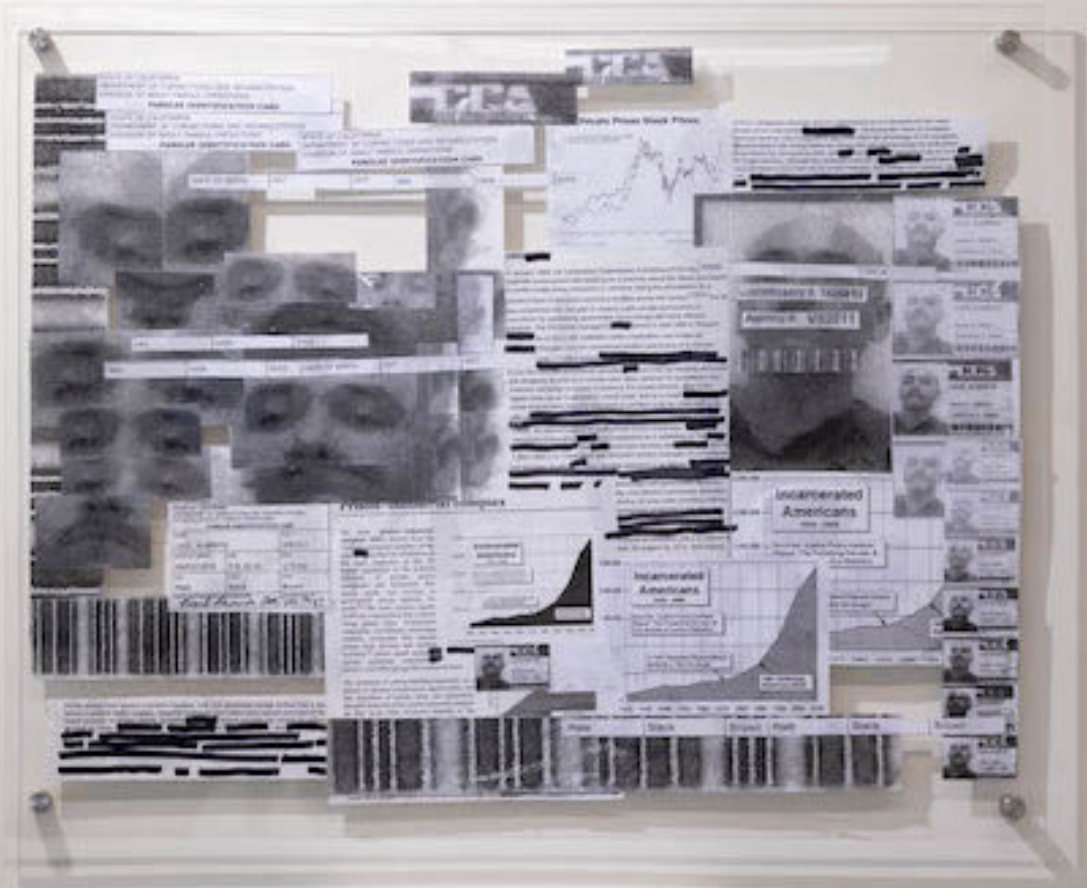


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# ReflectSpace Gallery Presents ‘Tactics of Erasure and Rewriting Histories’ Exhibition

by Contributor — April 6, 2023 in Art, Arts & Culture, Latest, News, Top Stories 0



Alberto Lule, "Am I Truly Free (a)," 2022. Collage on plexi. 18 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the Artist. Photo credit: Andrew Girosetto



GLENDALE—The ReflectSpace Gallery, Glendale Library, Arts & Culture, and Craft Contemporary unveiled “Tactics of Erasure and Rewriting Histories,” an exhibition that highlights diverse artworks documenting acts of reclamation and removal as a process of making history.

The five exhibiting artists – Fafnir Adamites, Andre Keichian, Alberto Lule, Miller Robinson, and Ryat Yezbick – use archival and forensic materials, found objects, and casting to investigate how state-sanctioned censorship creates a system of oppression that impacts their sense of identity. Their works explore the questions: What role does erasure play in informing one’s place in history? What other forms of representation can capture the fluidity of marginalized identities, the pains of inherited traumas, and the unstable truth of history?

Alberto Lule and Ryat Yezbick use the language of power to address the inherent violence in systems that seek to divide, categorize, and criminalize by instilling fear and centering on difference. Lule examines the control and manipulation of bodies in the US carceral system and questions who is granted authority over the bodies of others. He creates self-portraits following systems of identification and tools used by the police on incarcerated people. Reminiscent of the Bertillon system, developed in the 19th century to classify “the criminal’s” physiology by French policeman Alphonse Bertillon, Lule’s piece, “Am I Truly Free?” (2022) is a triptych composed of different identifiers based on the artist’s prison-issued identification card.

“Am I Truly Free? (a),” on view in the exhibition, is a collage on plexiglass that multiplies the copy of Lule’s prison-issued identification card, sectioning the artist’s face to his eyes, alternating them with graphs and excerpts on eugenics and reductive terms pertaining to criminal physiology. His *Investigation* (2019 -) series abstracts the artist’s body to traces of positions in which the police had placed him during his arrest. The positions are revealed through forensic ink blurring, rather than codifying, the body it seeks to identify.

Ryat Yezbick creates a blurry line between enunciator and enunciated, victim and perpetrator in their video installation, *growth lies, and pack of truth* (2022). News footage of the University of Texas tower shooting in 1966 has been edited to give space for an alternative universe in which vulnerable masculinity may alter the course of the future. This film, the first in a series from Yezbick’s growing archive of news coverage of mass shootings in the United States, presents a speculative narrative about a mysterious creature that spreads like a virus causing its hosts to go into a temporary state of physiological confusion. Housed in a tombstone, the film is a haunting reminder of the psychological trappings of fear and the objectification of the “Other.” The artist’s background as a cultural anthropologist informs their practice as they engage with the impact of digital surveillance technology on the collective American psyche and sense of co-responsibility.

In contrast to the abundance of information in Lule’s and Yezbick’s works, Andre Keichian, Miller Robinson, and Fafnir Adamites seek to give shape to histories that have been erased. Andre Keichian’s *Salt in the I* (2019) is a lyrical mapping of their family’s diasporic journey from the war-ravaged Middle East to France, Argentina, and the United States through the manipulation of their family photo album. Using salt and water to develop the negatives and bend wood for the frames, the different elements of the work collapse topographies of ocean, land, and temporalities.

The artist stretches the possibility of the archive to blend truth and fiction and insert the narrative of their Armenian-born Argentinian grandfather, who marks the beginning of their family’s migration as a stand-in ancestral queer. The act of speculation also comes from the influence of the Armenian Genocide on the artist’s family’s history of migration, the impact of which is still not fully recognized by the Turkish government. The artist asks, “If this happening can exist without the privilege of becoming official history, then what new alternative possibilities may emerge within modes of art and narrative within this gap?”

Initially a juried exhibition at Craft Contemporary, the new iteration at ReflectSpace expands on the original show by presenting the artworks in the context of a municipal institution, the Glendale Central Library. As a hybrid exhibition space between gallery

and archive, ReflectSpace offers an interface for the artworks to exceed their roles as representational objects, to become alternative forms of knowledge. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue, an updated reading list, and an educational supplement.

Reflectspace is located inside Central Library at 222 East Harvard Street. The exhibit will be on display from April 8 to May 28, with a free opening reception on Saturday, April 8 from 6 to 8 p.m.

“Tactics of Erasure and Rewriting Histories” originated at Craft Contemporary and is organized by Prima Jalichandra-Sakuntabhai, Craft Contemporary Exhibitions Manager. This collaboration between ReflectSpace and Craft Contemporary is supported by the Glendale Library, Arts & Culture and the City of Glendale, CA.

ReflectSpace is an inclusive exhibition gallery designed to explore and reflect on major human atrocities, genocides, civil rights violations, and other social injustices. Immersive in conception, ReflectSpace is a hybrid space that is both experiential and informative, employing art, technology, and interactive media to reflect on the past and present of Glendale’s communal fabric and interrogate current-day global human rights issues. ReflectSpace is housed in Glendale Central Library and online at [ReflectSpace.org](https://ReflectSpace.org), it is support in part through the efforts of the Glendale Library, Arts & Culture Trust (GLACT).

Known as the “Jewel City,” Glendale is the fourth largest city of Los Angeles County. With a population of more than 200,000, Glendale is a thriving cosmopolitan city that is rich in history, culturally diverse, and offers nearly 50 public parks, and easy access to a municipal airport. It is the home to a vibrant business community, with major companies in healthcare, entertainment, manufacturing, retail, and banking.

Founded in 1907, the Glendale Library, Arts & Culture Department includes eight neighborhood libraries including the Brand Library & Art Center, a regional visual arts and music library and performance venue housed in the historic 1904 mansion of Glendale pioneer Leslie C. Brand, and the Central Library, a 93,000 square foot center for individuals and groups to convene, collaborate and create. The department also serves as the chief liaison to the Glendale Arts and Culture Commission which works to continually transform Glendale into an ever-evolving arts destination. Glendale Library Arts & Culture is supported in part through the efforts of the Glendale Library Arts & Culture Trust (GLACT). For more information visit [GlendaleLAC.org](https://GlendaleLAC.org), or contact Library, Arts & Culture at 818-548-2021 or via email at [LibraryInfo@glendaleca.gov](mailto:LibraryInfo@glendaleca.gov).

Located on Los Angeles’ historic Miracle Mile since 1965, Craft Contemporary reveals the potential of craft to educate, captivate, provoke, and empower. With a focus on contemporary art made from craft media and processes, Craft Contemporary presents dynamic exhibitions by established and emerging artists and designers who are often underrepresented in larger art institutions. Through a robust roster of regular programs and events, Craft Contemporary offers creative opportunities for the public to participate in hands-on workshops led by professional artists. Craft Contemporary cultivates an environment for people in Los Angeles to deepen their relationship to art, creativity, and one another. For more information, visit [www.craftcontemporary.org](https://www.craftcontemporary.org).

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