

Gonzalo Reyes Rodriguez

Survey

April 26, 2024-June 1, 2024
opening April 26, 6-8pm

David Peter Francis is pleased to present *Survey*, Vancouver-based artist Gonzalo Reyes Rodriguez's first solo exhibition with the gallery, and first in New York City. Featuring a new body of photographs, this series expands the artist's examination of archival image practices and narrative construction.

The archive has been central to Reyes Rodriguez's recent oeuvre— whilst in Mexico City in 2020 the artist came across a box of vernacular photographs that surround the life of a young, presumably queer, man. These photos offer a window into a history, one that Reyes Rodriguez has quietly built a narrative around in subsequent works. Within these compositions, timelines and authorship become murky; origin becomes obfuscated. How can we surmise the identity of this person? What is the context of these images in relation to themselves and others? The closer we get to certainty regarding these questions, the further away we actually find ourselves.

In *Survey*, these inquiries become amplified. The Mexico City archive is present alongside other image troves pulled from defunct gay magazines, unnamed family albums, and the artist's personal photographs. The resulting Warburg-ian arrangements recall *vanitas* painting— the artist introduces metal armatures in which photos are affixed and connected to each other, floating weightless in a void of black. These sculptural apparatuses do not suppose a hierarchy but rather act as a conduit of meaning. In Mike Mandel and Larry Sultan's influential book *Evidence*, Robert Forth writes about how image meaning is constructed by the gaps of time between what is being perceived, rather than the image itself.¹ Reyes Rodriguez finds himself within this framework— these are photographs of the time and space between photographs, the split second it takes for a page to turn in a book or a film reel to cycle to the next frame. More simply, they are photographs of infinite connection.

Through all of this, Reyes Rodriguez does not make didactic or conclusory statements; he presents pictorial questions regarding the act of looking for the viewer to answer for themselves. Perhaps photographs are not meant to tell truth, but rather provide a pathway across 'time-space' for all of us to connect.

Gonzalo Reyes Rodriguez (b. 1987, Mexico City) received his BFA from School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2009, and his MFA from University of Pennsylvania in 2016. He attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2019. Prior to his solo exhibition at David Peter Francis, Reyes Rodriguez has presented solo projects at Blinkers, Winnipeg; Terremoto/La Postal, Mexico City; The Arts Club of Chicago, Chicago; and The Windor Contemporaneo, Madrid. He participated in the 2023 edition of Bienal Sur-International Biennial of Contemporary Art of the South, as well as had his work included in exhibitions at Luhring Augustine, New York; National Gallery of Art, Ottawa; Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow; Marinaro, New York; Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg; North Miami Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami; and Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Omaha; amongst others. He is the recipient of the 2023 Scotiabank New Generation Photography Award. Reyes Rodriguez lives and works in Vancouver, Canada.

¹ Forth, Mandel, Sultan, "Evidence", 70.