

Emilio Chapela: No Pain, No Brain

Opening Reception: Thursday April 28, 6-9 pm

Exhibition runs through June 18, 2016

Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Saturday 11-6 pm

Henrique Faria Fine Art is pleased to present *No Pain, No Brain*, Emilio Chapela's third exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition unfolds in two-parts featuring a series of sculptures, sound installations and appropriated artifacts from Bell Laboratories' Holmdel, New Jersey headquarters. The primary exhibition will occur at the gallery's 67th street location, and the satellite video installation, *The Space Around*, will take place at HotelAmericano in Chelsea (May 3rd – 8th) in conjunction with the Frieze New York Art Fair.

Building on the investigations of the material manifestations of human perspective and information systems that Chapela introduced in his 2014 exhibition at the gallery, *No Pain, No Brain* focuses specifically on the intellectual and physical environments of the Bell Labs complex during its 90-year history. As the premises were recently sold to Nokia and some buildings are on the verge of being converted into a "mixed-use lifestyle complex", Chapela took on the role of archeologist and anthropologist as he explored the grounds and uncovered its vestiges: abandoned but yet stuck in time, as if the scientists would return at any moment to resume their experiments. The *Do Not Erase* series offers a tribute to the anonymous scientists whose musings remain un-erased on whiteboards inside the Laboratories' buildings. Saved from the fate of demolition, these whiteboards preserve for posterity the 'famous last words' and calculations of some of these scientists, some of which include "No Pain, No Brain" and "Friederich Mach's Gut!" As Ken Farmer writes in the exhibition text, "Appropriation and direct representation creates the space for abstract reflection and poetic speculation." Re-contextualized in the gallery, these whiteboards offer glimpses into sets of knowledge and potentialities to which the public was not privy until now.

Other works also speak to Chapela's interest in opening up the boundaries of knowledge in light of the on-going technological boom. *Bell Nobel Prizes* (2016) presents the brains of the eight Nobel Prize-winning scientists that worked at Bell Labs. The brains here are made of silicon, "an atomic relative of the carbon that comprises our own brains and the key ingredient in the computer chips that power society today", and continue the speculation started by early science fiction writers of whether it too could be a life-generating and sustaining element. The sculptural series *Semi-transistors* (2016) also uses silicon as a base, this time for amplifying an electrical current, and pays homage to the first transistors that were created at Bell Labs in 1947. In the midst of the surge of artificial intelligence and machine learning, these works acknowledge the present issues brought forth by the machine's challenge to the singular power of the human mind.

Throughout its history, Bell Labs worked to incorporate different modes of thought into the science-oriented complex by inviting artists to come work in and around the grounds. Chapela's *The Space Around*, a multi-media video installation made specifically for the HotelAmericano, takes its inspiration from *The Expanding Universe*, the work that sound artist Laurie Spiegel made at Bell Labs in the mid-1970s, and the Horn Antenna, where the sounds of the cosmic microwave background were first detected. Chapela visited Bell Labs over the course of a year, capturing the vacated grounds and the Ozymandias-esque relics of the Horn Antenna and the Eero Saarinen-designed main building and water tower on video. As Farmer describes, the video, which features the music of Laurie Spiegel and contemporary composer Esteban Chapela, elicits "nostalgia for a bygone frontier where technology's daunting potential outweighed its inescapable presence." By exploring the history of the site where so many life-changing inventions were created, Chapela's work imagines how the arts and sciences will continue to forge new pathways forward and present new ways of seeing and thinking about the world we inhabit.

Emilio Chapela worked with the support of Henrique Faria Fine Art and Grupo Habita. And with the generous help of Bellworks, Somerset Development and Nokia Bell Labs.

Emilio Chapela (Mexico City, 1978) graduated from the Communication Sciences program at the Universidad Iberoamericana in 2002. He received a diploma in Photography and New Media at the Centro de la Imagen in Mexico City in 2001. He has been the recipient of several grants from the Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (FONCA) including: Coinversiones Culturales (2008) and Jóvenes Creadores in two different occasions (2004-2005) and (2013-2014). Chapela was the artist in residence at the International Studio and Curatorial Program in New York in 2007 and at Linnienstrasse 40 in Berlin in 2012. He was presented with the Emerging Artist Award at PULSE Miami Art Fair in 2008 and the Tequila Centenario award in the same year. In November 2014, Chapela, with the support of a grant from the Fundación Jumex published *Die K. F. Gödel Bibliothek*, a book about an artistic project that explores the creative possibilities of books and libraries. His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City (2015); Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros, Mexico City (2013); Galería 11x7, Buenos Aires (2012); Linnienstrasse 40, Berlin (2012); Casa Maaud, Mexico City and Henrique Faria Fine Art, New York (2011); and Saw Gallery, Ottawa (2011). He has participated in acclaimed group exhibitions at Foto Colectania, Barcelona (2013); the Museo de Arte Moderno, Casa del Lago and Centro de la Imagen, Mexico City (2012); the Kunstraum and NGKB, Berlin (2012); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto (2011); Pace Gallery, New York (2011); the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2010); Houston Photo Fest Biennial (2010); and the Bass Museum, Miami (2010). His work has been acquired by the following institutions and collections: Colección Jumex, Mexico City; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; FEMSA, Monterrey; and Sayago & Pardon, Tustin, California.

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