

The Blinding Light

Raven Chacon / Ishan Clemenco / Manon de Boer / Claire Fontaine /
Isabel Nuño de Buen / Carlos Reyes / Ana Vaz

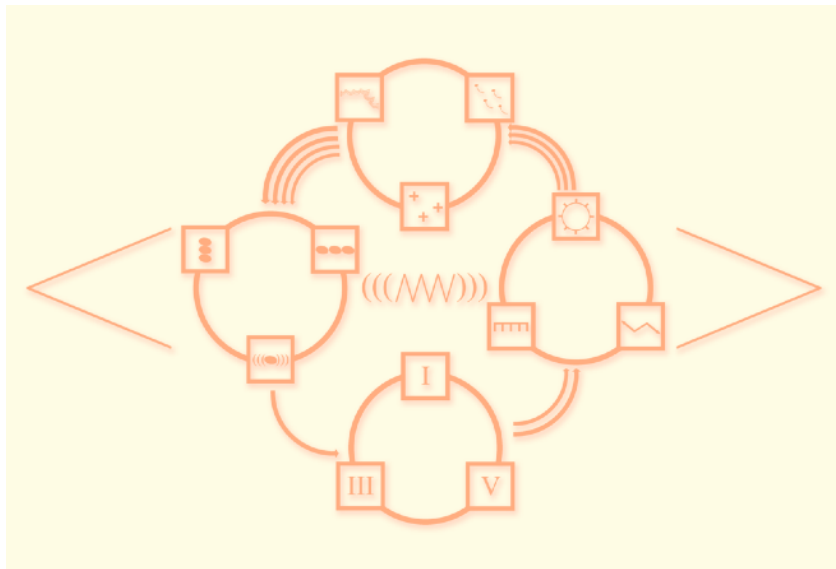
Curated by Diego Villalobos

January 11 - April 19, 2025

Opening Reception: January 11, 5-8pm

Curator walkthrough at 5pm

/ (Slash) 1150 25th St, Building B, San Francisco
Open Thursday-Saturday, 11am-6pm



Raven Chacon, *Compass*, 2021, score, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

"The more complex the object we are attempting to apprehend, the more important it is to have different sets of eyes, so that these rays of light converge and we can see the One through the many."

- Benjamín Labatut

There's more to reality than meets the eye. In his nonfiction novel *When We Cease to Understand the World*, writer Benjamín Labatut takes us on a journey through some of the most consequential scientific discoveries of the 20th century, which ushered in the age of Quantum Physics. With each discovery, a new set of questions emerges. Thus, Labatut concludes, any search for ultimate truths will lead you, again and again, to uncertainty or the unknown.

The Blinding Light chooses to dwell in a place akin to the quantum realm, where things are out of focus and less defined. The exhibition brings together a group of national and international artists who navigate and blur the boundaries between fiction and reality, and between dominant official narratives and first-person experiences. Working across sculpture, moving image, and printed matter, they present speculative stories and counter-histories of resistance and survival—from revisiting moments of colonial contact to reclaiming embodied knowledge—to bring forth the possibilities of forgotten events and challenge fixed historical and political accounts.

Claire Fontaine's site-specific installation considers which stories are told and which are neglected, expanding throughout the gallery space and acting as a stage for the exhibition to unfold. **Manon de Boer** presents a film that moves between visual absence and auditory presence to blur perception, memory, and time. **Isabel Nuño de Buen's** materially dense and layered sculptures appear as archaeological fragments of a much larger, unknowable whole from a distant past or perhaps not-so-distant future. **Carlos Reyes's** sculpture brings to light the infrastructures of power that are often unseen but felt, as **Ana Vaz's** film gives breadth, scope, and embodiment to current ecological disasters brought by the legacies of colonialism. **Raven Chacon** invites us to take cues from our immediate surroundings and re-orient ourselves in relation to the land and its non-human inhabitants. Lastly, **Ishan Clemenco** translates the concerns of intonation and duration in music into treatments of surface and volume in constructed sculptures, marking and exposing intervals of geologic and human-made time.

This exhibition offers an opportunity to slow down, find one's footing, listen, and engage with a different, perhaps even anti-Enlightenment, way of thinking. It welcomes reflection on the relationship between the individual and our environment—natural and human-centric. This is an invitation to experience the world through its flip side, where history is porous, timelines are malleable, and the thresholds between the artwork, artist, and audience are uncertain.

- Diego Villalobos

The Blinding Light, curated by Diego Villalobos, is the sixteenth in a series of exhibitions at Slash, each organized by an independent Bay Area-based curator. Please join us for a walkthrough of the exhibition with Villalobos at 5pm on January 11, 2025.

The exhibition is generously supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Raven Chacon is a composer, performer, and visual artist who creates videos, prints, photographs, and installations that bring sonic experimentation into the gallery. Score-based creation is fundamental to his practice, encouraging generous forms of collaboration among performers and audiences, sights of significance, nonhuman actors, found sounds, and natural elements. In this way, he connects Diné (Navajo) worldviews and relationship models with Western classical, avant-garde, and art-music traditions. Chacon was

born in Fort Defiance, Arizona within the Navajo Nation and lives and works in Hudson, NY.

Ishan Clemenco began his career as a composer whose early work was concerned with just intonation and extended duration associated with 60s minimalism. Private composition residencies with Lou Harrison and poetics studies with Anne Waldman at Naropa Institute led to extensive Asian travels. Since 2000, he has worked intensively with adapted chalk-line marking instruments, developing a vocabulary of visual and spatial possibilities for site-specific chalk-line wall drawing, and large-scale suspended chalk-line installation. He makes work in a variety of material, notably metal, sound, photography, and video, and has worked internationally in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Clemenco lives and works in San Francisco.

Manon de Boer mainly works within the audiovisual realm. Her work is pervaded by an extended experience of time that resists normativity, functionality, and productivity. Instead, she advances a concept of time that is firmly anchored in the conditions of creation that incessantly produce a present and presence. De Boer was born in Kodaicanal, India and lives and works in Brussels.

Claire Fontaine is a collective feminist conceptual artist founded by Fulvia Carnevale and James Thornhill in Paris in 2004. Since 2017 she lives and works in Palermo, Italy. Her name is inspired by Duchamp's iconic ready-made, the urinal entitled *Fontaine*, and a famous brand of French notebooks (*Clairefontaine*); it defines a space where the biographies of the artist is not directly connected to their artworks allowing their research to become a space of freedom and desubjectivisation. Claire Fontaine works in video, sculpture, painting and writing.

Isabel Nuño de Buen incorporates sculpture, drawing, and installation to make allegorical portraits of the self and human civilization as an ongoing, multifarious, and incompletable project. Her practice is fragmented and characterized by a sense of fluctuating open-endedness. Her work, and its multiple potential significations, plays with and exists on the threshold of comprehension, much like former civilizations and our complete, knowable selves exist on the threshold of our understanding, but ultimately remain just beyond our grasp. Nuño de Buen was born in Mexico City and lives and works in Hanover, Germany, and Mexico City.

Carlos Reyes is a New York- and Puerto Rico-based artist who often explores how ephemeral phenomena are imprinted onto infrastructure, architecture, and other designed objects that we encounter in our built environments. Heat transfers, inhale/exhale patterns, and the movement of light, for example, provide moments for Reyes' interventions. By partially indexing these subtle changes, he sculpturally considers how broad social shifts are enacted individually, incrementally, and quietly.

Ana Vaz is an artist and filmmaker born in the Brazilian midwest inhabited by the ghosts buried by its modernist capital: Brasília. Her filmography activates and questions cinema as an art of the (in)visible and an instrument capable of transforming human perception, expanding its connections with forms of life – other than human or spectral. Her practice also encompasses writing, critical pedagogy, installations, and collective walks. Vaz is a founding member of the COYOTE collective, an interdisciplinary group working between ecology and political science through conceptual and experimental formats.

Diego Villalobos is a curator from Cuernavaca, Mexico, currently living and working in San Francisco. He serves as an Associate Curator at the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, where he curates exhibitions and public programs. From 2016 to 2019, Villalobos worked as a curator at The 500 Capp Street Foundation. Additionally, from 2016 to 2017, he co-ran odium fati with Benjamin Ashlock out of their garage in San Francisco's Inner Richmond neighborhood. He holds a BFA in New Genres from the San Francisco Art Institute.

/ **(Slash)** is a nonprofit exhibition space founded in 2018 to advance and promote the expanding field of contemporary art in San Francisco through exhibitions, publications, and public programming.