

PABLO HELGUERA
“A door with no means of passage”
exhibit from October 19 to December 9, 2017

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Pablo Helguera (b. 1971, Mexico City) is an interdisciplinary artist working with installation, sculpture, photography, drawing, socially engaged art and performance. Helguera's work focuses on a variety of topics ranging from history, pedagogy, sociolinguistics, ethnography, memory and the absurd, in formats that are widely varied including the lecture, museum display strategies, musical and theatrical performances, and written fiction.

His project, *The School of Panamerican Unrest*, a nomadic think-tank that physically crossed the continent by car from Anchorage, Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, making 40 stops in between. Covering almost 20,000 miles, it is considered one of the most extensive public art projects on record as well as a pioneering work for the new generation of artworks regarded under the area of socially engaged art.

Pablo Helguera performed individually at the Museum of Modern Art in 2003, where he showed his work *Parallel Lives*. His musical composition, *Endingness*, has been performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Helguera has exhibited or performed at venues such as the Museo de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; ICA Boston; RCA London; 8th Havana Biennial, PERFORMA 05, Havana; Shedhalle, Zurich; MoMA P.S.1; Brooklyn Museum; IFA Galerie, Bonn; Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum; MALBA Museum; Ex-Teresa Espacio Alternativo; The Bronx Museum; The Brooklyn Museum; The Guggenheim; SITE Santa Fe Biennial; Artist Space; BAM; and Sculpture Center, amongst many others.

Works presented:

ARTOONS 2009

Is a series of drawings of cartoons about the art world (2009). The cartoons have been published in many art publications internationally.

“An artist, museum educator, Helguera is an amateur anthropologist of the art world. Helguera's cartoons really do capture the foibles, ironies, and occasional stupidity of the art world with a clarity and economy that only a simple pen drawing and a short piece of text can achieve. Cartooning is rarely done in the art world (...) maybe the problem isn't the humor, but the truth.

Pablo's Artoons can do the talking for us”

CHIPILO (video black and white, 15 minutes, 2008)

Chipilo is a documentary based on the story of a town of the same name, located in the vicinity of Puebla, Mexico. Toward the last quarter of the XIXth century, the government of Porfirio Diaz sought to populate some areas of Mexican land with European immigrants, with the hopes that these groups would enrich the culture and economy of the region. Amongst these groups were a community of northern Italians that spoke Veneto and agreed to settle in these new lands. The unusual geographic, social and political circumstances of this arrangement resulted in the Italian settlers to remain in isolation without much other choice. To this day, most of the population of Chipilo speak the original Veneto dialect. Chipilo documents, in the original language, the story of this community that resulted from a utopian social experiment in the XIXth century Mexico.

ZAGAT 1999-2001

Consisted in using the format of the restaurant reviews of the famous Zagat survey – a New York based publication which uses user's quotes to construct its reviews and rating. New York restaurants

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who get a positive review generally display a laminated printout of the review at their entrance. These reviews, using the same quotes from such restaurant reviews, were geared toward art world stars of the moment such as Richard Serra, Matthew Barney and Francesco Clemente. The project is a precursor of the Manuel of Contemporary Art Style.

PUNITIVE EXPEDITION 2002

(A topographer's tale) is an installation consisting of 12 stereoscopic post cards that narrate the punitive expedition of General Pershing in the pursuit of Pancho Villa, who attacked American soil in 1916. Villa hid in the rugged Sonora desert and the American expedition was ultimately a failure. The images of the post cards correspond to the desert of Afghanistan in the beginning of the XXth century.