

UNIT 5

Xavier Robles de Medina

Opportunity Cost

19 January – 16 February 2018

“When I think about X I think about the distinction between excavation and composition—you compose an image and then you must use the tools you have to excavate it. He tells me stories about weeping, about dedication, and a rigorous commitment to formalism over many years. Composition is dramatic and demonstrative and discursive.

It is also the condition of the digital that insists against the formalism of everything X produces, and that makes his drawings sharp and timely. It holds the pictures in tension inside of their framing. But it is not so uncommon to find young, intelligent artists with this fluency—our training is obsessed with the choppy endless churn of formal experimentation. It would be trite to insist on mastery of form as some point of difference and I want to avoid this at all costs—I think that instead of an appeal to conservatism or formal stability (a good investment) it is the slippage outside of critical time that animates this process that I have called excavation.

Watching X in the studio working under the big lights is like watching a technical (even an industrial) process, and his shows and texts are contextualized by this commitment to a time scale that cannot be dissected using our readymade tools—at least not without bad faith caricature. To excavate these spaces (flooded buildings, burning facades; scenes of disasters now long in the past) is to labour under the strict conditions of this opacity. It is to treat your own clear vision as contact with the face of another. You really love this other. You can trust them never to betray their human origins. The face is tough as diamond but I think that, with time, an excavation is possible.” - Louis Mason

Praz-Delavallade Los Angeles is pleased to present *Opportunity Cost*, Xavier Robles de Medina's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles at UNIT 5.

Xavier Robles de Medina (b. 1990, Paramaribo) lives and works in London, UK, and is a 2019 MFA candidate at Goldsmiths, University of London. In 2015 Robles de Medina was the youngest nominee for the Prix de Rome Visual Arts (Netherlands) and also completed artist residency programs at WOW Amsterdam and CTG: Zimbabwe. In 2016 his drawing *En het donker duurde een volle nacht* earned him a place on the short-list of the Royal Award for Modern Painting (Netherlands). Solo exhibitions include, 'if you dream of your tongue, beware' at Catinca Tabacaru Gallery, New York; 'als het hele lichaam oor zou zij' (if the whole body were an ear) at Readytex Art Gallery, Suriname (2018); and 'The Future Looms Dark and that we can Scarcely' at Barbé Urbain Gallery, Belgium (2018).

Xavier Robles de Medina: Opportunity Cost will be on view at 6150 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles CA 90048 from 19 January to 16 February, 2019, Tuesday through Saturday, from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM or by appointment.

UNIT 5 is an exhibition space shared by 1301PE and Praz-Delavallade.