

RYAN LEE

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Martín Gutierrez: *Can She Hear You*
April 9 - May 9, 2015
Opening: Thursday, April 9, 2015, 6-8PM

RYAN LEE is pleased to announce *Can She Hear You*, an exhibition of new work by **Martín Gutierrez**. The exhibition features music videos, a site-specific installation, and two new series of photographs that explore nebulous concepts, spaces, and relationships. This is the artist's second solo show at the gallery.

Gutierrez continues to investigate identity, both personal and collective, through the transformation of physical space and self. Interested in the fluidity of relationships and the role of genders within each, they employ mannequins as their counterparts to explore the diverse narratives of intimacy. Integral to the work is the active participation of the viewer. "It gives us peace of mind to believe a line separates virtual from reality, but perception until disproven by fact is truth; so if there is a line, it can be moved," Gutierrez says. Acting as a conduit, they supply the framework through a gesture, a room, or an exchange between characters that facilitates a dialogue between the viewer and the work, one that requires the viewer to question his or her own perceptions of sex, gender, and social groups.

Nothing is what it seems in *Line Ups*, a series of large color photographs that features up to seven characters (six mannequins and the artist) shifting identities throughout each image. Addressing concepts of uniformity and transformation, Gutierrez is suggestive rather than didactic by obscuring information to seduce the viewer into re-examining particular social codes. Gutierrez reconstructs humble materials, such as plastic leis, table skirts, vinyl, and tape, transforming them into authentic sets, accessories, and costumes that reference iconic films and people, including Milla Jovovich in Jean Paul Gaultier for *The Fifth Element*, *Showgirls*, and Brigitte Bardot. Featured in each image, Gutierrez executes every aspect of the process from hair and make-up to costume and set design, as well as lighting, directing, and photographing. In *Girl Friends*, Gutierrez further expands on ideas of intimacy and fluid boundaries, particularly as it relates to relationships between three pairs of women: Anita and Marie, Tess and Nomi, and Rosella and Palma. Each pair exists in disparate worlds in these cinematic photographs, but find similarities in the dichotomy of allure and sorrow, innocence and mischief, freedom and confinement. Gutierrez leaves it up to the viewer to interpret the relationships, whether they are familial, romantic, or platonic, and whether lust, love, or affection is involved.

On view will be new music videos— *Head 2 Toe* (released March 2015), *If*, and *Blame the Rain*— that continue Gutierrez's investigation of self-transformation, collective identity, and the play between fantasy and reality. These most recent videos as collaborations further the development of Martine, their singer persona, and serve as documentations of Martine as performance. Recurring themes of sexuality, fantasy, 90s hip-hop, and agency are presented throughout. Gutierrez plays director and muse, composer and performer in both the photography and video work, integrating pop video tropes with a nostalgia of an early MTV aesthetic. The music, described as "Lana del Rey goes to the Caribbean and is still sad," is written, sung, and produced solely by Gutierrez, and the videos show an evolution as he examines celebrity, popular media, and the monstrous nature of both. The music videos were conceived in collaboration with Angelo Balassone, Michael Fails, Cory Hill, Alicia Lane, David Mendoza, Kathryn Tedesco, and Alex Waterston. In addition, Gutierrez will produce two site-specific works: a video for RLWindow on view exclusively during opening weekend (Apr 9-13), and a gallery installation that explores bodily abstraction and forms.

Gutierrez (b. 1989) received their BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2012. Current and recent exhibitions of their work include *Disturbing Innocence*, curated by Eric Fischl at the Flag Art Foundation, New York, NY and *About Face: Self-Portraiture in Contemporary Art* at the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, where their work is also included in the permanent collection. Saint Laurent Paris selected their first unreleased single, *Hands Up*, for their Cruise Collection 2012 video editorial. Their music has been featured by several other fashion houses including Christian Dior and Acne.

Forthcoming exhibitions include *Clifford Ross: The Abstract Edge: Photographs, 1996-2001*, on view May 14-June 27. For media inquiries, contact Courtney Willis Blair at 212-397-0742 or courtney@ryanleegallery.com, Joakim Andreasson at jandreasson@culture-edit.com, or Abby Margulies at abbymarguliespr@gmail.com.