

RYAN LEE

RYAN LEE GALLERY LLC
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Stephanie Syjuco

Solo Presentation

Armory Show 2019, Booth F25

March 7-10, 2019, Preview March 6

RYAN LEE is pleased to present a solo exhibition of Stephanie Syjuco's work for its second presentation at the Armory Show. The gallery's booth will include work recently featured in the Fall 2018 season of Art21. Based on the works from a Syjuco's *CITIZENS* series, the works probe philosophical and historic definitions of what it means to be a "citizen" in terms of national belonging, civic engagement, and radical responsibility. Other themes explored include the ideas of insertion, negation, and standards through the use of Photoshop transparency patterns, chromakey fabrics and white balance and color cards.

RYAN LEE's presentation will consist of a new banner called *I AM AN AMERICAN*, a reference to Dorothea Lange's photograph of a sign posted by a Japanese American business owner following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. A related work is currently on view at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University. Four staged portraits present black-clad, masked "protesters," depicted by young UC Berkeley students, who are grappling with an uncertain reality and their own precarious status in the current political climate. Each of the recent graduates is queer, of color, undocumented, or a woman, rendered anonymous by being covered up. In the style of graduation or formal studio portraits, the images are part fiction, part reality, offering a chance for each sitter to inhabit a temporary fantasy of themselves as an active resister while protecting their identities. In today's political climate, masks have become crucial for protesters, preventing their identity from being discovered through facial recognition technology, crowd-sourcing, and other modern surveillance methods.

In another portrait, a checkered cloth obscures the sitter's entire body; this pattern makes tangible Photoshop's grey and white transparency background, translating a digital tool into a material experience. An undocumented individual who received her college education through the DREAM Act, her status in the United States is now potentially under threat. Under protective anonymity, the former students claim a presence where their individual identities must be absent, occupying a tenuous space between invisibility and visibility.

RYAN LEE will also be debuting three new photographic works at the Armory, including a work titled *Chromakey Aftermath (Standard Bearers)*. In the work, two figures with heads turned away from view are draped in Chromakey fabric while holding flags. The Chromakey represents the idea of insertion, while these figures, with their identities hidden, represent what can be imposed onto them.

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Stephanie Syjuco (b. 1974 Manila, Philippines) received her MFA from Stanford University in 2005 and her BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1995. A long-time arts educator, she taught at Stanford University, California College of the Arts, San Francisco Art Institute, Mills College, and Carnegie Mellon University before joining the faculty at University of California, Berkeley in 2014. Syjuco's work has been included in international biennials and exhibitions, including the 2015 Asian Art Biennial, Taiwan; 12th Havana Biennale; 2014 Bucharest Biennial; La Triennale di Milano; ADN Platform, Barcelona; Contemporary Art Museum, Houston; Heinz Nixdorf MuseumsForum, Paderborn, DE; MoMA PS1, New York; Noguchi Museum, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Verein fur Kunst and Kultur, Berlin; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; Z33 Space for Contemporary Art, BE; and ZKM Center for Art and Technology, DE, among others. Her work is held in the public collections of Berkeley Art Museum, CA; Columbus Museum of Art, OH; Contemporary Museum Honolulu, HI; Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA; Museum of Fine Arts Houston, TX; New Museum, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; San Jose Museum of Art, CA; and Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, among others. Syjuco received a Guggenheim Fellowship Award in 2014 and a Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Award in 2009. In 2018, Syjuco will complete an installation commissioned by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art as part of the museum's Public Knowledge program, and her work will be included in *Being: New Photography 2018* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Syjuco lives and works in Oakland, California.