

Zac Hacmon: *Mia* (detail). Photo by Etienne Frossard



Zac Hacmon: *Mia (Mine)*

Locust Projects presents *Mia* (*mine in Spanish*), an interactive immersive installation consisting of sculpture, video, and sound by Brooklyn based artist Zac Hacmon. *Mia* is one of three new exhibitions opening at Locust Projects in the Design District on September 10, 2022 with a public reception to meet the artists from 6-8pm.

Mia is the culmination of a two-year socially engaged project by the artist that comprises urban research, social work, and a one-year collaboration between Hacmon and Alexa, an asylum-seeking transgender person who is currently waiting for their immigration status trial in New York City. Originally from Nicaragua, Alexa fled to the U.S. due to political reasons after the 2018 protests in their country.

The artist and Alexa met through a workshop initiative at the RDJ Refugee Shelter - a non-profit organization in New York City serving exclusively asylum seekers and refugees. The initiative created a meaningful ongoing space for healing and dialogue inspiring Hacmon to engage Alexa in a creative collaboration with Alexa receiving an honorarium for her time, as well as social support to enable her as a key collaborator in the artist's project. The show's title, *Mia*, is named after Alexa's daughter who still lives in Nicaragua.

ABOUT THE PROCESS

Mia is intended to portray imaginary, mental, political, and geographical boundaries that transform into intimate conversations narrating Alexa's life story. The viewer enters a dark atmosphere filled with massive sculptures resembling air ventilation shafts and the sound of voices emanating from speakers within the shafts. It is a fictional environment where cultures and diversity meet in one place.



Poem reading session with Alexa

One of the recordings features Alexa's voice reciting poems she's dedicated to her daughter and mother by Nicaraguan authors Ruben Dario and Claribel Alegria—both politically and socially influential voices in the development of Nicaragua and Latin America since the 1900s. The second audio is from a video that includes footage of Alexa wearing a traditional Nicaraguan dress and dancing to La Cumbia Chinandegana by Jorge Paladino, a well-known Nicaraguan singer from her hometown of Chinandega. For Alexa to wear a Nicaraguan traditional dress is a conscious political statement to raise the voice of Nicaraguan refugees, underrepresented minorities, and LGBTQ+ asylum seekers who experience even harder conditions due to their sexual orientation.

The design of the sculptures resembling air ventilation shafts follows the form of institutional architecture inspired by writings of 'Non-Places' by Marc Augé —architecture that has no history or identity. One of the units in the show is an interactive architectural structure, where viewers are invited to go in. It is part of Hacmon's ongoing series of structures best described as a one person living unit=Home, shelter or cell. Once inside the unit in the show, the viewer feels the lack of identity, however the refugees' identity is flourishing. *Mia* simultaneously conveys a sense of belonging and non-belonging, entrapment and freedom.

Mia is made possible, in part, through support from an Artis Exhibition Grant.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Photo by Kuo-Heng Huang

Zac Hacmon (b.1981 Holon, Israel) is an artist based in New York. Hacmon explores socio-political conflicts through architecture and its relationship to the human body. He has recently exhibited at the Hunter East Harlem Gallery (NY), Smack Mellon Gallery (NY), Tel Aviv Museum of Art (Israel), Meet Factory Gallery (Czech Republic), Artsonje Center (South Korea), The MAC Belfast (Ireland), Jack Shainman Gallery, The Border Project Space (NY). Hacmon has had residencies at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha (NE) 2022, Fountainhead, Miami (FL) 2021, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace program (LMCC) 2019 and Salem Art Works (NY) 2017, MeetFactory Studio (Czech Republic) 2015, MMCA National Art Studio in Seoul (South Korea) 2012.

Hacmon received the 2021 LMCC Creative Engagement Grant, the 2020 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Craft/Sculpture, the Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, the Santo Foundation Individual Artist Award 2019, and the Cafe Royal Cultural Foundation Visual Project Exhibition Grant 2019. Hacmon received an MFA from Hunter College and a BFA from Bezalel Academy of Art (Israel).

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.



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