

Wall Street International

ART

Paul Ramírez Jonas

5 Jul — 17 Sep 2017 at the New Museum in New York, United States

18 JULY 2017



Paul Ramírez Jonas. Courtesy of New Museum

At the New Museum, Ramírez Jonas will continue to pursue a body of participatory work focusing on aspects of trust. His installation on the Fifth Floor includes two pieces defined by direct transactions between the audience and the artist, *Fake ID* (2017) and *Alternative Facts* (2017). The conditions of these encounters are devised by the artist and informed by the site, but also require the open-endedness of direct engagement with a voluntary public. The project also includes related public programs and, adjacent to the gallery, the Resource Center presents “Legal Fictions,” a collection of critical texts, historical facsimiles, and artists’ projects that explore the politics of identification.

Fake ID invites visitors to empty their pockets of materials containing information that determines currency, credit, access, membership, and citizenship status. Through a process of exchange and inquiry with each participant, the facilitator deconstructs photocopies of their

documents—school IDs, transportation passes, credit cards, and licenses—to create a new identification card. Through human exchange, Ramírez Jonas aims to enunciate the possibilities of self-determined constructions of identity within the limits of datafication imposed by state, corporate, and social systems.

Alternative Facts turns lies and fantasies into ostensibly truthful public documents. The first untruth designates the facilitator, often the artist himself, as a notary. Each subsequent certification process yields two documents, one for the viewer to keep and another to be collected in the installation. The cost of this legal transformation requires payment of a gold coin, which the facilitator will assist in creating by chemically altering visitors' spare change.

The poetics of these works speak to a political climate in which authoritarian tactics seek to delegitimize the participatory checks and balances of democratic truth, through pronouncements of “dishonest media” and the falsehoods of public servants being declared “alternative facts.” Relative meaning, the plurality of truth, shared authorship, and the equal right to free speech were once more commonly employed to assert marginalized voices. But with such sentiments of alternativeness being co-opted by oppressive forces, “Half-Truths” asks: is it possible to collectively create and agree upon truth?

“Paul Ramírez Jonas: Half-Truths” is the second iteration of the Department of Education and Public Engagement's annual R&D Summers, a research and development initiative that foregrounds the New Museum's year-round commitment to community partnerships and public dialogue at the intersection of art and social justice. Each R&D Summer takes the form of a residency and an exhibition.

Members of the Teen Apprentice Program (TAP), a summer youth employment internship, will facilitate Fake ID and Alternative Facts during the Museum's daily open hours. Paul Ramírez Jonas will perform Alternative Facts on select Thursday evenings—July 6, July 13, July 27, August 3, and August 10—from 7–9 p.m., during pay-what-you-wish hours.

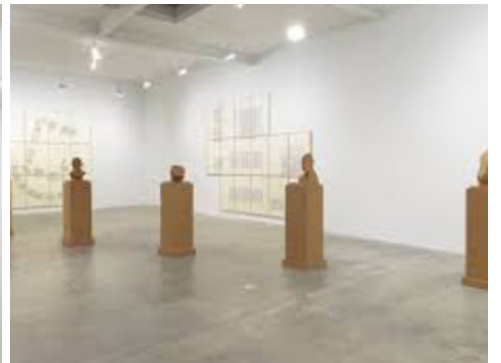
The exhibition is curated by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement; Shaun Leonardo, Manager of School, Youth, and Community Programs; and Emily Mello, Associate Director of Education.

Paul Ramírez Jonas is a citizen of Honduras and the United States, born in 1965 in Pomona, CA, and raised in Honduras. He lives and works in Brooklyn. He has had solo exhibitions at institutions including Pinacoteca do Estado, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2011); the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2008); the Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas (2007–8); and Ikon Gallery Birmingham, UK and Cornerhouse, Manchester, UK (2004). “Atlas, Plural, Monument,” a twenty-five-year survey of his work, is on view at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston through August 6. In 2010, his project *Key to the City* was presented by Creative Time in cooperation with the City of New York. In 2016, his project *Public Trust* was presented by Now and There in Boston. He participated in the first Johannesburg Biennale (1995); the first Seoul Biennial (2000); the sixth Shanghai Biennial (2006); the twenty-eighth Sao Paulo Biennial (2008); the fifty-third Venice Biennial (2009); and the seventh Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2015). He is currently an Associate Professor at Hunter College, City University of New York CUNY.

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Opening hours

Tuesday & Wednesday
From 11am to 6pm
Thursday from 11am to 9pm
Friday & Sunday
From 11am to 6pm



Captions

1. Paul Ramírez Jonas. Courtesy of New Museum
2. Paul Ramírez Jonas. Courtesy of New Museum
3. Paul Ramírez Jonas. Courtesy of New Museum