

GALLERY 1: Pedro Lasch, *LATINO/A AMERICA: The New York and North Carolina Suites*

GALLERY 2: *If Only To Wake My Neighbors Up*: David Colagiovanni, Lydia Moyer, Michael Robinson;
 videos curated by Jerstin Crosby of Acid Rain Production

ON VIEW: January 16–February 28, 2009

OPENING RECEPTION: Friday, January 16, 5–8 pm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Branch Gallery is pleased to present its inaugural 2009 exhibitions, Pedro Lasch: *LATINO/A AMERICA: The New York and North Carolina Suites* and *If Only To Wake My Neighbors Up*—a video program curated by Jerstin Crosby of Acid Rain Production, featuring the work of David Colagiovanni, Lydia Moyer, and Michael Robinson.

Begun in 2003, Pedro Lasch's ongoing series *LATINO/A AMERICA* consists of the presentation and distribution of a new map of the American continent. Included here are works from *Route Guides #1: Arrival New York* (2003/2006) and *Route Guides #2: Arrival North Carolina Triangle Region* (2006/2008). The work operates on the premise of the following events: Lasch gave forty identical maps measuring 30 × 40 inches to twenty individuals he knew would cross the U.S.-Mexico border. Each person received two maps that were folded to fit in a purse or pocket—one for them to keep, and one for them to mail back to the artist upon arrival at their final destination. The resulting maps show various degrees of wear and tear as a result of exposure to weather and being handled, examined, and transported. The maps appear with corresponding texts that cite selections of conversations between the artist and each migrant, immigrant, or traveler. As the participants' experience is visualized through creased, torn paper and text, the words "Latino/a" and "America" acquire different contextual meanings—reflecting on the deep impact of popular and political shifts in our culture. The resulting works serve as documentary evidence of a new "Latinidad" that extends globally, and is redefining the English-speaking world. As Lasch states, "we are changing what 'America' means, and what it means to be 'American.'"

In addition to the *LATINO/A AMERICA Route Guides #1 and #2*, the exhibition will include three large-scale wall murals of "Latinidad." One of these site-specific works will be produced at Branch Gallery, while two others will be executed on outdoor walls during the course of the exhibition. The locations will be chosen in collaboration with specific communities in the Triangle, to collectively engage with a site's immediate and symbolic significance.

If Only To Wake My Neighbors Up is a collection of three short experimental films curated by artist Jerstin Crosby of the televised video-art series Acid Rain Production. These works speak figuratively or literally to a connection of shared histories, marked geographies, and current events. Michael Robinson's *Victory of the Sun*, for example, is a loosely grafted voyage through dormant sites from past World's Fairs that breeds an eruptive struggle between spirit and matter, ego and industry, futurism and failure. David Colagiovanni's *P.S. and yellowish with sunglasses that are nylon neon* investigates man's desire for freedom and escape through the legacy of Larry Walters, who in 1982 attached forty-three weather balloons to a lawn-chair and was raised 16,000 feet above Los Angeles, violating federal air space. Walters, who was later arrested for flying an unapproved craft, went on an inspirational lecture tour about achieving one's dreams, eventually taking his own life in 1992.

Lydia Moyer's short film, *1979*, comes from her investigative journey to the site of the Jonestown massacre in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. This piece acts as a monument to an infamously scarred and tainted ground where 918 members of Jim Jones' Peoples Temple committed mass suicide. In the process of making the film, Moyer herself flew to the same remote airstrip where Congressman Leo Ryan was murdered by Jones' followers. As a testament to Acid Rain Production's mission of employing contemporary artistic practice to bring political and social concerns to the attention of a viewing public, these three works speak eloquently about the location of human experience within landscape.

For further information contact Teka Selman or Chloë Seymore at info@branchgallery.com or 919.918.1116.

Gallery Hours: Wed–Sat 12–6 or by appt.

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