ADRIANA SALAZAR | Perpetuity
December 6, 2014 - March 21, 2015

Adriana Salazar: Perpetuity is organized by Sweeney Art Gallery at UCR ARTSblock and curated by Tyler Stallings, Artistic Director, Culver Center of the Arts & Director, Sweeney Art Gallery, UCR ARTSblock. Support has been provided by Grand Central Art Center, Santa Ana, California and Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Harbor, California, venues that presented a selection of works by Salazar for the 2013 California-Pacific Triennial, UC Riverside’s College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the City of Riverside.

RELATED EVENTS
Adriana Salazar: Perpetuity is presented in collaboration with UC Riverside’s The Immortality Project, a multi-year project to study the science, philosophy, and theology of immortality, exploring questions related to the nature of heaven, civic immortality, and the desirability of living forever.

CONFERENCE | December 12-13, 2014
Objects of Devotion/Objectos de Devoción: Latin American Material Religious Cultures

OPENING RECEPTION | December 12, 2014 | 5:30-7:00 PM | FREE ADMISSION

Salazar will also lecture on her work as part UC Riverside’s conference Objects of Devotion/Objectos de Devoción: Latin American Material Religious Cultures. This multidisciplinary conference engages historic and contemporary Latin American and Latino visual, material, and ritual cultural practice, coinciding with an exhibit of the work of Mexican-British artist, Aline Echeverria, at UCR California Museum of Photography (November 1, 2014- January 24, 2015). Echeverria’s photographs explore the relationship of visual, religious, and material culture in Mexico, considering in particular the power of the Guadalupe icon. Information on conference, http://ideasandsociety.ucr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/10H-Objects-Conference-December-12-13-FINAL.pdf

ABOUT THE ARTIST
Adriana Salazar lives and works in Mexico City. Her work as an artist has focused on the question of gestures, the relationship between subjects and objects, and the boundaries between nature and artifice. She received a BFA Honors degree from the Jorge Tadeo Lozano University of Bogota, and a Magna cum Laude MFA degree in Philosophy, from the Javeriana University of Bogota. With her kinetic objects and installations she has participated in art biennales, collective and solo exhibitions, such as Thingworld (Triennial of Media Art) 2014, the California-Pacific Triennial, and the Manifeste de Quebec. She has also participated in several academic and curatorial projects, and has received fellowships from international artistic residencies, such as Akiyoshidai International Art Village, Japan, and Nordic Artists’ Center, Norway. Adriana has worked as a Visiting Lecturer at the Javeriana University of Bogota, and at the Jorge Tadeo Lozano University of Bogota. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Art Practice, at UNAM, in Mexico City.

ARTIST’S WEBSITE: www.adrianasalazar.net
Adriana Salazar: Perpetuity presents two large-scale, kinetic installations and four single-channel videos.

The artist creates sculptures and installations in which formerly alive creatures are mechanically re-animated: garments, fallen plants, taxidermy animals, and objects that are in the verge of becoming debris, have been transformed into new beings that are able to linger in the realm of artificiality. Through the construction of these hybrid objects, Salazar blurs the definitions of a machine, of what is natural, and of what is alive.

Is there an end to our existence? Can we be separated from our bodies and be transformed into something else? Salazar’s work has continued to revolve around these questions in different ways. This is why the realm of mortuary customs appeals to her: it presents numerous ways to approach the ultimate unknown. Salazar further explains her work in an interview with Tyler Stallings, Artistic Director, Culver Center of the Arts & Director, Sweeney Art Gallery, UCR ARTSblock.

TS: Do you feel that you use your work as a means to explore the meaning of life and death, that is, exploring whether or not we may transform into something else when our bodies stop working?

AS: I try to blur the boundaries between life and death through my work, showing that things can have a lifespan of their own, exceeding the definitions of life and death, that is, exploring whether or not we may transform into new beings that are able to linger in the realm of artificiality. Through one hand we have the shiny metal parts of the machines, and on the other hand we have the implants as objects that have been transformed through time and human interaction. These implants have been imprinted by our bodies, as much as our bodies have imprinted these objects.

TS: One of the inspirations for presenting your work at UCR came from having a conversation with UCR professor John Fischer in the Philosophy Department. He received a $5M award from The Templeton Foundation to re-grant to other researchers around the country who are studying immortality, whether empirically, such as with hydras, or culturally, such as with concepts of uploading consciousness to machines. Or, in the difference between immortality and the afterlife, that is, immortality is about living forever now, while the afterlife is about immortality after one's death. What are your thoughts about consciousness and immortality versus the afterlife?

AS: I think the problem of differentiating both concepts, that is Afterlife and Immortality, begins when trying to define life. It seems to me that the border between that which is alive and that which is not alive, is a blurry one from every point of view. Even in Biology, this definition is something that is constantly debated and put to the test. Is a rock something that is alive? Is the process of death the same as the process of decay? Are we dying from the moment we are born? If all of the previous questions had a positive answer, then, we would be experiencing our afterlife throughout our lives. Immortality, on the other hand, suggests to me the idea of resisting to change and transformation, which is a strictly human idea.

TS: Recently, you moved to Mexico City to pursue a Ph.D. Could you describe what you hope to be your eventual thesis and/or dissertation, and how you may think that it will affect your future work?

AS: This Ph.D. program I am undertaking is proposing a double challenge: the dissertation has to refer to my own-art practice. I am exploring the possibilities of animism, that is, the possibility of life in the inanimate. I hope this to be both a process of finding new projects and ways to explore this subject aesthetically, and I also hope this can allow me to bind all projects and aesthetic findings together into a larger body of work, connecting this body of work with other disciplines.