



## **More spaghetti please, comrade**

Noah Barker

Twilight comes twice a day, at end of westerns and the dawn of new regimes. We search for a plot amidst the soft light of its interlude encountering a duo beneath desert heavens. They've set out for the cinema, but not gotten very far. Props and idle instruments lay about. "More spaghetti please, comrade" beckons Industry, a young gringo and hired gun. Collective as carbohydrates in a sauce of strategy are garnered through consultation with the Franco Solinas Constellator. Franco wrote for the movies and was a man of the left. And as someone once said "every Marxist on the block wanted to make a western," so Franco did four of them, or many more depending who you ask. Peering into moments of his oeuvre the would-be film makers glimpse common practices and recurring themes. They redevelop and juxtapose. Protagonists and plots slip between centuries and continents. In turn, they do with the aesthetic object what we do with the technical in a dream of mistaking their sets for the real. "Cinema is war by other means" whispers Politics, who's tattered and unshaven. Franco might disapprove, but for us it's enough to move the plot forward.

Noah Barker lives and works in New York, NY. Recent solo exhibitions include *Air de Paris* (2018), *Eclair*, Berlin, (2017) *AndNow*, Dallas, (2016); *First Continent*, Baltimore, MD (2015). Recent curatorial projects include *Please talk, please make contact*, Sydney, Sydney, (2018); *A Few Open Systems*, *AndNow*, Dallas, (2017); *encore mode*, *Lodos*, Mexico City, (2017); *International Currency*, *Lodos Contemporáneo*, Mexico City, (2015).



1

**Screen Adaptation (of a Western)**

2019

Spandex, old press releases

Dimensions variable

2

**Franco Solinas Constellator**

2019

Powder-coated steel, lamp, acrylic, C-print, magnets

182 x 488 cm

3

"It is better to know where to go and not know how to get there than it is to know how to go but not where."

2019

Light on west wall

Dimensions variable

4 (not presented in the exhibition)

"It is better to know where to go and not know how to get there than it is to know how to go but not where."

2019

Light on east wall

Dimensions variable



## Screen Adaptation of a Western

2019

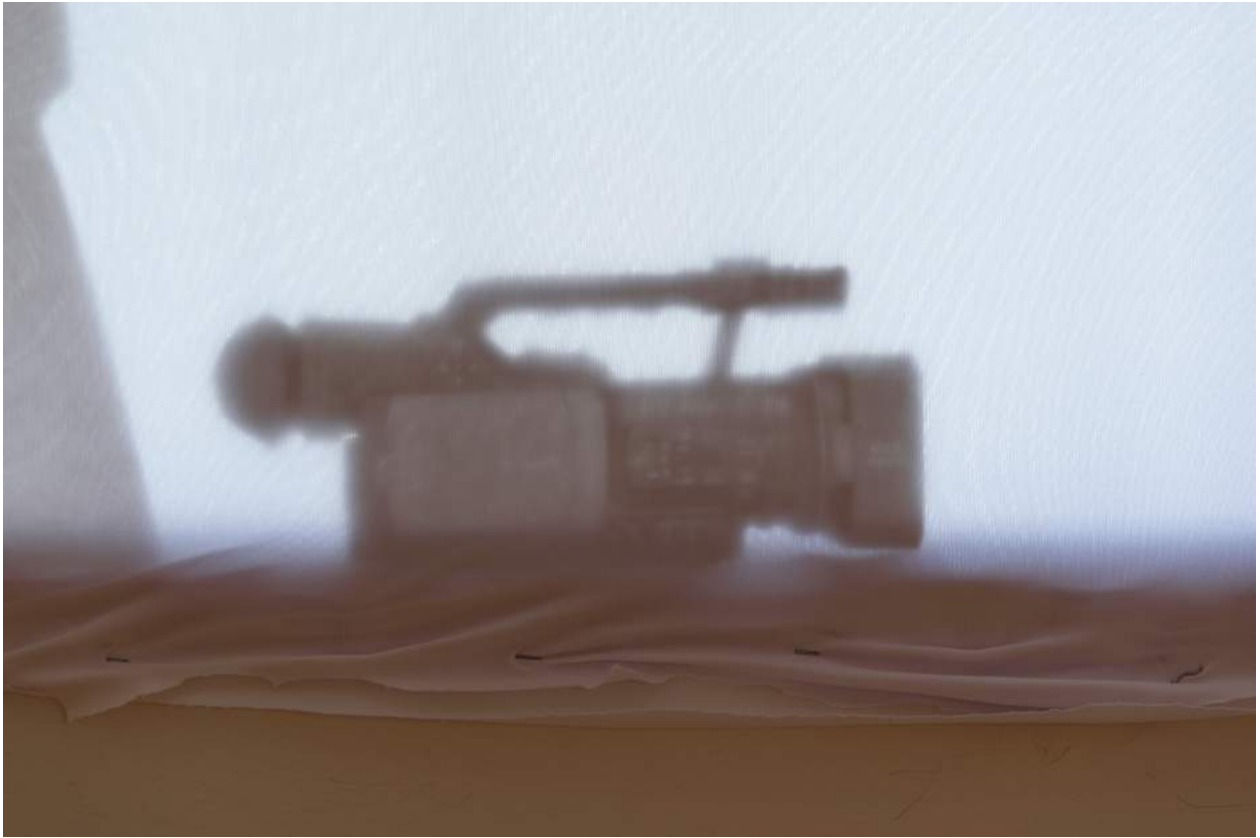
Spandex, old press releases

Dimensions variable

Following three prior Screen Adaptations (below), the window wells of the gallery are covered with three layers of spandex. They are both adhoc screens for viewing films and sets for the production of one. The forms in the screen are cut from press releases from the gallery's prior exhibition, *Nuevo manifiesto de cine mexicano*. Put simply, the materials are subsumed within a new narrative, while the current exhibition might be thought to begin 'after the manifesto'.









### Franco Solinas Constellator

2019

Powder-coated steel, lamp, acrylic, C-print, magnets

182 x 488 cm

Franco Solinas was an Italian screen writer that wrote four westerns amidst the 400 that were made in Italy in the genre's post-war peak. All four occur within the Zapata sub-genre which feature plots set in the Mexican Revolution. Each of Solina's Zapatas features a gringo whose usually a mercenary and a Mexican bandito with varying commitments to the revolution, though usually this reluctant protagonist is usually swayed by the end to a just life of revolt. Prior to the series of westerns, Solinas wrote the screenplay for Battle of Algiers, which was referred to as a western in the pages of Cahiers du Cinema due to the recurrence of violence to carry the plot and maintain attention. Intended derogatorily at the time, as a colusion with hollywood's standards, by the 70's it would berecalled much later by Jean-Pierre Gorin that, "Every Marxist on the block wanted to make a western".





The Constellator features approximately 50 stills from all of Solina's films in which he has a primary writing credit. The stills are magnified by acrylic half spheres and magnetically mounted to powder coated steel. Across the more than 15 films, scenes repeat and a collective knowledge develops between protagonists, whether a republican revolutionary in 1810 Italy, an Uruguayan Tupamaros in 1970, a communist militant in the 30's, an 18th century Caribbean slave revolt leader, an Algerian in the 50's, etc. This collective knowledge is real and perhaps most apparent in the 2003 screening of Battle of Algiers at the Pentagon as part of its counter insurgency education. The Tupamaros tactics showcased in State of Siege were, by way of the handbooks published by Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, inspiration for the Red Brigades of Italy during the 70's which saw themselves as a contemporary partisan's movement against the recent coalition government of the PCI and Christian Democrats. The film following State of Siege was indeed a 1930's political thriller on an underground Communist militant between Paris and Turin. At the time in which the film is set, the party, and all parties other than the fascists, were expelled from Italian parliament. This forced politics to engage in other means, literally made extra-parliamentary out of necessity.

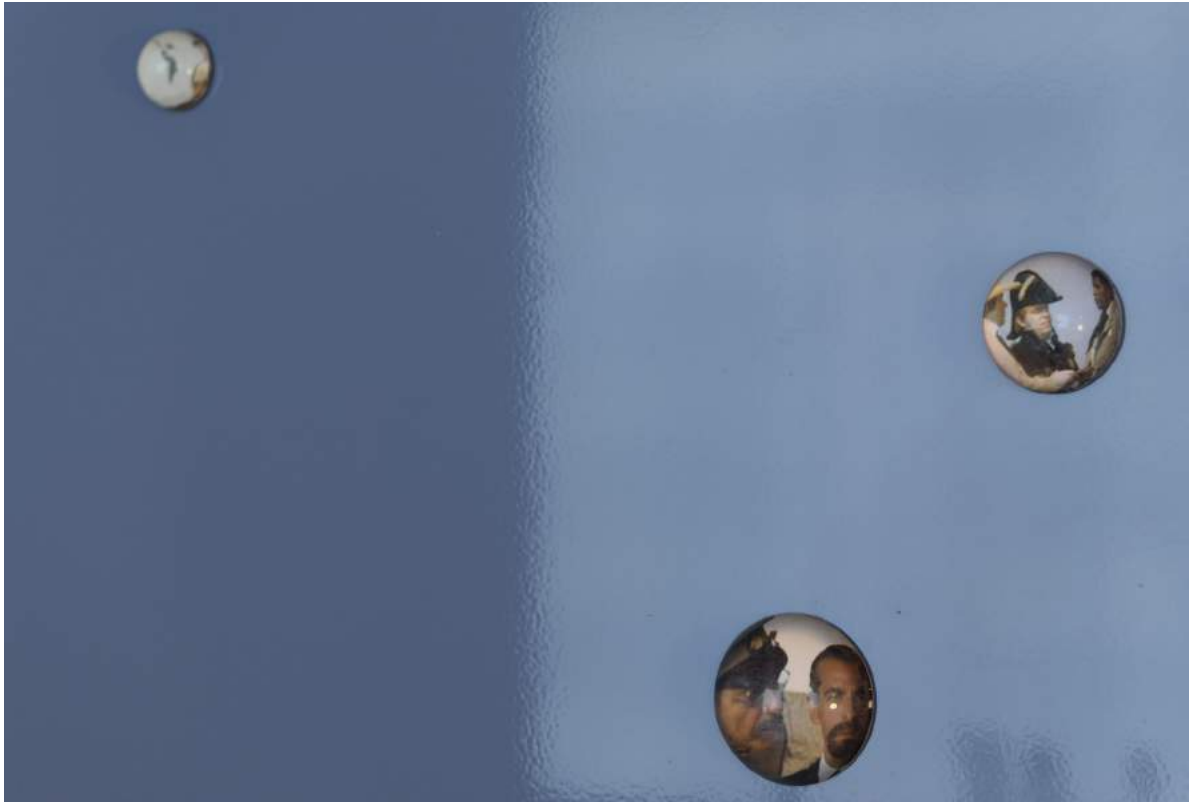


And, as Carl von Clausewitz said "war is politics by other means", famously inverted by Foucault to say politics is war by other means, the exhibition text takes the liberty to ponder whether cinema is politics by other means and by extension, whether "Cinema is War by other means." To this end, the constellator is a site for strategy to be thought through a mutable form of montage. A guillotine in Algeria is a sign of the French republic and the repressive nature of that form of governance, the old revolution turned inward against the colony, while Marlon Brando shows a Caribbean soldier how to tie a noose, doing things the civilized way. Both are instruments and so you might pair them or separate them and find a victim or an ideology or an operator. There are some groupings left from the last consultation. On the left (beige and blue) the omnipresent antagonist of the state is contillated. On the right (pink and yellow) it is the collective and the individual. The statesman assures the revolutionary that new laws will be passed, justice will be found, yet those in power remain.













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not know how to get there than it is  
to know how to go but not where.

2019

Light on West wall

Dimensions variable

It is better to know where to go and  
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2019

Light on East wall

Dimensions variable

(Not on view)