

October 2016 WHITEHOT MAGAZINE "The Best Art In The World"

Pedro Reyes's DOOMOCRACY Presented by Creative Time is a Scary Ride Through Trumped up Politics By JAN GARDEN CASTRO, OCT. 2016



Doomocracy Voting Room, with actor Marjorie Conn. Courtesy Will Star, Shooting Stars Pro.

Pedro Reyes: *Doomocracy*, Creative Time, Oct. 7th – Nov. 7th

Just as Gulliver's travels showed us the divide between the haves and the have-nots, *Doomocracy* carries us into the worlds of Trump and right-wing extremists who believe that an unborn baby's life is worth more than its mother's, that elections are rigged, that global warming doesn't exist, that the extinction of species isn't happening, and that life's main goal is scoring big in business – by any means necessary. *Doomocracy* is a series of tragi-comic scenes that remind us of the fragility of the vote, of choice, and of non-divisive behaviors. Sponsored by [Creative Time](#) and running through November 6th, *Doomocracy* is the brainchild of Pedro Reyes, who turned guns into shovels to plant 1800 trees in Culicán, Mexico in [Palas pro Pistolas](#).

Don't read more if you scored a ticket to [Doomocracy](#)! The tickets are free, but it's sold out – unless you become a member of Creative Time, an option many chose to get into Duke Riley's [Fly by Night](#), another CT spectacular reviewed [here](#). The Brooklyn Army Terminal is a perfect setting with a breathtaking view of New York Harbor and its endless military buildings, plus an old train parked in a courtyard. A guard tells us Elvis worked here when he was in the Army. A wood version of Lady Liberty marks the entrance, and visitors first walk along a lit outdoor path to a simple bar serving drinks and snacks. Red, White, and Blue groups of twelve leave every five minutes, going down a creepy corridor for a short van ride.



Sugar Coffins Actor: Matthew Korahais. Photo Credit: Will Star/Shooting Stars Pro. Courtesy of Creative Time.



Actor Marjorie Conn. Photo Credit: Will Star/Shooting Stars Pro. Courtesy of Creative Time.

Suddenly, the van is pulled over, and we are forced to put our hands on a rail and face the wall as we are frisked, yelled at, and, soon, pushed into a polling place where a nice older lady with a lap dog denies me a ballot as others vote. Then we line up to leave, marching past another area where a guy is shredding ballots. We land on couches in a “parlor” where two ladies explain which pink and blue guns are most effective against intruders; of course, there is a gun accident as we are ushered into a medical waiting room with Zyprexa, Velotab, Valium, Ritalin, and other posters. A woman waiting futilely for Oxycodone interacts with one of our group members who promises to give her an RX if she gets one; some group members get meds from the doctor; he hands me some blue pills as we leave.

We are next at a place where a man playing an organ explains the virtues of child coffins made to smell like fresh-baked cookies or eclairs, “Sugar is God, huh?” Next stop: a Halliburton & Company conference table where we are given statistics showing their revenue between 2014 and 2015 dropped from 32,870 million to 23,633 million, and where we are coached to vote in favor of a bailout from Uncle Sam. Those who choose the bailout get to go to a ‘penthouse’ art party with contemporary art, including a rocket allegedly designed by Frank Gehry and a Christopher Wool art piece with the letters FA RT. Next, an uncomfortable tunnel leads to a classroom run by an artificial intelligence screen that can “see” us. The screen picks on an Asian

man in our group, who has already put up with other racial profiling. Our ‘lesson’ here is about how to use bullet-proof blankets for our children and how to help our child “build a wall.”



"Artisanal Air," Actor Carolina Do. Photo Credit: Will Star/Shooting Stars Pro. Courtesy of Creative Time.

In the Breathe Room, a future-time Lady in White in teaches us that nitrogen levels are reaching deadly highs on our planet, causing increases in asthma, etc, especially for toddlers. She is selling Everest Air. Nearby, two JC high school cheerleaders are singing a catchy tune and practicing a play, complete with flames, about burning a woman who supports abortion. We then find ourselves in an appropriately-painted elevator where we ‘feel’ hot and poisonous temperatures due to global warming. Logically, a virtual reality national park, year 2100, is next stop. We are told the planet surface is unrecognizable and that all parks are privatized and run by Nature Corporation. Wearing special goggles and holding onto a rope (because we can’t see), we enter a virtual reality forest which is devastated and disorienting...I won’t discuss the final rooms here. When we emerge from our journey, over an hour has passed, the full moon is still high in the sky, and I have a strange feeling of disconnection and loss.

Creative Time succeeds in encapsulating a doomsday scenario that both captures the Trump “build a wall” kinds of paranoia and also suggests that climate change, deforestation, and air pollution, which we seem to be experiencing in real time and which is already deadly in some locations around the world, will get worse. Obviously, CT’s timing – exactly before the election – is perfect. This adventure allows for choices – different votes and doors – all along the way. So enjoy – and VOTE! **WM**



[Jan Garden Castro](#) is a contributing editor for Sculpture Magazine. She has curated exhibitions for IAA (International Arts & Artists), Jane V. Zimmerli Museum, JAMA (Japan Association of Art Museums), and ICPNA (Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano – Lima). Her books include *The Art & Life of Georgia O’Keeffe*, *Sonia Delaunay: La Moderne*, and *The Last Frontier*. Her work has appeared in *The Nation*, *American Poetry Review*, and *American Book Review*.