

Cécile B. Evans at Château Shatto

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Text by Matthew Lax



Cécile B. Evans, *Something tactical is coming*. (2018). Scale model production model with chroma key paint, Makibes screens, Raspberry Pi players, Real Game FX miniature fog machine, 3D prints, paper, wood, puppet hand, 3D printed mask dummy, 82 ½ x 41 x 39 ½ inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Château Shatto, Los Angeles. Photo: Elon Schoenholz.

“Let’s not talk about the infrastructure, we have to save the building,” cries Amos, a puppet, in the second episode of Cecile B. Evans’ multi-faceted project, *Amos World*. A “television show set in a socially-progressive housing estate,” *Amos World* informs Evans’ new installation at Château Shatto, *Something Tactical is Coming*.

The general plotline of *Amos’ World* follows the revelation of the social flaws inherent to the design of the built utopia, all of this conveyed through a combination of live-action performances by the building’s tenants, floating .jpegs, and sentient, 3D flowers. The villainous Amos, apparently modeled after the late le Corbusier, becomes a stand-in for the lingering promises and cold, male utility of Brutalism.

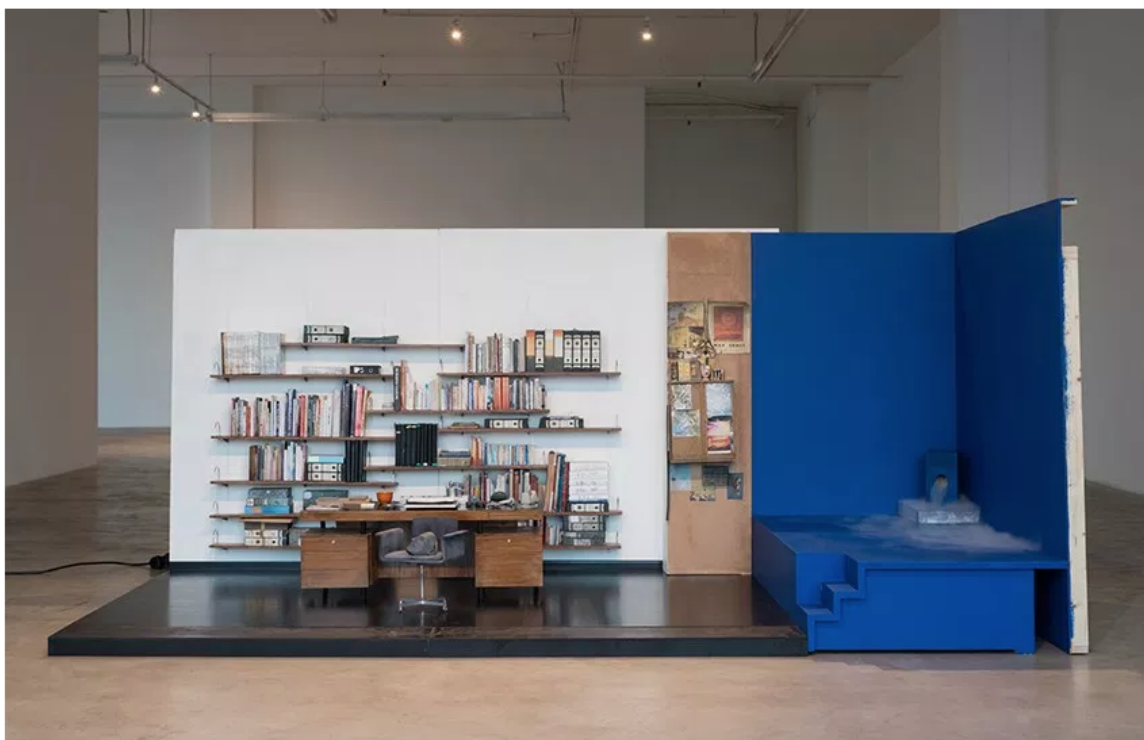
Like a residence where one enters through the garage instead of the front door, the face of the installation is also the tail of the work. One encounters the exposed “backside” of a length of short wall studs upon entering the space; the dazzling video is largely a footnote to the exhibition. As such, scene summations and plot points are handwritten across the set’s plywood surface, outlined in dangling HDMI cords and media players. Filmed b-roll of *Amos’ World* play out on mounted pocket screens—puppeteers guide Amos against a blue screen, performers gesture offscreen.

The reverse of this theater flat forms a scale model, the set of *Amos’ World*: an office in diorama tableau, neither dollhouse nor maquette, with tiny tools atop a desk and a bookshelf of intricate volumes re-produced in miniature. Indeed, two prints, character studies framed within server drive-cases, are also hung at a stunted height. Absorbing these details requires crouching, an imposition that enhances the sense of mediated entrapment, in this *unité d’habitation*.

This office is abruptly partitioned by a chroma-key blue stage, empty except for a fountain endlessly issuing smoke from the corner. Yves Klein blue is the same as chroma key blue is the same as green screen—a consuming shade allowing for metaphor, a composite, or in this case, the potential for the absent, edited illusion of Amos’ independent movement. Chroma-key is not usually meant to be visible, yet Evans replaces function with the implication of subtraction. The void becomes centralized, context becomes marginalia—scrubbed and distilled to a single moment.

The complete episodes of *Amos World* will play at Frieze Los Angeles.

Cecile B. Evans: *Something Tactical is Coming* at Château Shatto runs from January 5–February 24, 2019 at Château Shatto (1206 S. Maple Ave, Suite 1030. Los Angeles, CA 90015).



Cécile B. Evans, *Something tactical is coming*. (2018) (installation view). Image courtesy of the artist and Château Shatto, Los Angeles. Photo: Elon Schoenholz.



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Cécile B. Evans, *Something tactical is coming*. (2018) (detail). Image courtesy of the artist and Château Shatto, Los Angeles. Photo: Elon Schoenholz.



Cécile B. Evans, *We even age honestly (Character Study)* (2019). Anodized metal server case, UV print on acrylic, inkjet print, electrical tape, packing gauze, 19 x 17 x 3 ½ inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Château Shatto, Los Angeles. Photo: Elon Schoenholz.