

PICK OF THE WEEK: Fiona Connor

Château Shatto

artillery

by Lauren Guilford | Mar 23, 2022



Fiona Connor, "My muse is my memory, an archive of Closed Down Clubs," 2022. Installation view.
Courtesy the artist and Château Shatto, Los Angeles.

A series of curious doors assembled in neat parallel lines resemble haunted monuments or an uncanny labyrinth of portals to seemingly familiar spaces. Fiona Connor's solo exhibition, "My muse is my memory, an archive of Closed Down Clubs" is an ongoing series that documents the doors of clubs, businesses and community spaces that have closed in Los Angeles—a continuation of the artist's inquiry into the social and psychic processes that shape our built environments. Employing several production methods, Connor maps the fragments of a world profoundly altered by the COVID 19 pandemic and its impact on the survival and adaptability of community spaces in Los Angeles, amplified by the city's deep-rooted issues relating to development and gentrification. The careful labor involved in Connor's sculptural reproductions evokes the unending process of deconstruction and reconstruction—labor that honors the particular identities and collaborative energies that once activated these civic spaces. By meticulously replicating the frayed details and human remnants of each facade—capturing ephemera such as posters, stickers, flyers and eviction notices—Connor emphasizes space that is situational, relational and socially constructed. Connor's rearticulated doors are multidirectional, multivalent, nonlinear portals that embody the memories of social histories. Hovering on the tenth floor of the historic Bendix building, the installation is framed by large industrial windows overlooking South Los Angeles—a vista of unending portals permeate the urban landscape.

Connor's material documentation of overlapping temporalities, blurring the past, present and future is reminiscent of Italo Calvino's postmodern novel *Le città invisibili* (Invisible Cities). Calvino writes, "the city does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the street, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls." Connor navigates the boundaries of our built environments, asking us to notice the intimacies of the everyday and the infinite plurality of hidden worlds that surround us.