

Open to the Public at VACANCY

November 18, 2015



Brody Albert and Kaeleen Wescoat-O'Neill, *Collapsible Scissor Gates (Red)* (2015), Dyed MDF, 8 x 8 x 10.5 feet. Image courtesy of the artists and VACANCY.

For his 1969 exhibition at the Eugenia Butler Gallery in Los Angeles, Robert Barry posted a sign on the locked gallery door that read "From March 10 through 21, the Gallery will be Closed." With their current exhibition at VACANCY, *Open to the Public*, Brody Albert and Kaeleen Wescoat-O'Neill

engage in a similar exploration of place, space, and access. The artists have divided the gallery with two accordion-like security gates, crowding visitors into shallow spaces at the front and back, accessible only through the rear entrance. Squeezed into the periphery—and redirected onto the street—attendees become actors in a performative social sculpture.

More than simply a theatrical device, *Collapsible Scissor Gates (Red)* asserts itself as an object: the gates resemble industrial ready-mades but were in fact meticulously constructed from a matte-red dyed MDF (down to threads on the screws). Its materiality attracts even as its placement divides. Both signifier and signified, a sculpture of a gate and a gate itself, it frames our vision and focuses our movements instead of prohibiting them.

Open to the Public upends the typical wandering gallery experience. Viewers are forced to engage with their neighbors, personal space bubbles eroding with each new visitor. Proximity breeds camaraderie, and we look through two sets of filters at our new peers. Have we left the realm of art for this brief detour or merely extended it, gossamer threads trailing on the sidewalk behind us?

With subtle shifts in context, the artists blur the barrier between public and private environments. The artworks' previous roles are visible, as in a palimpsest, beneath their

newfound materiality and function. *Open to the Public* provides a twist on Barry's nullification, offering new paths by subverting those we are most familiar with.

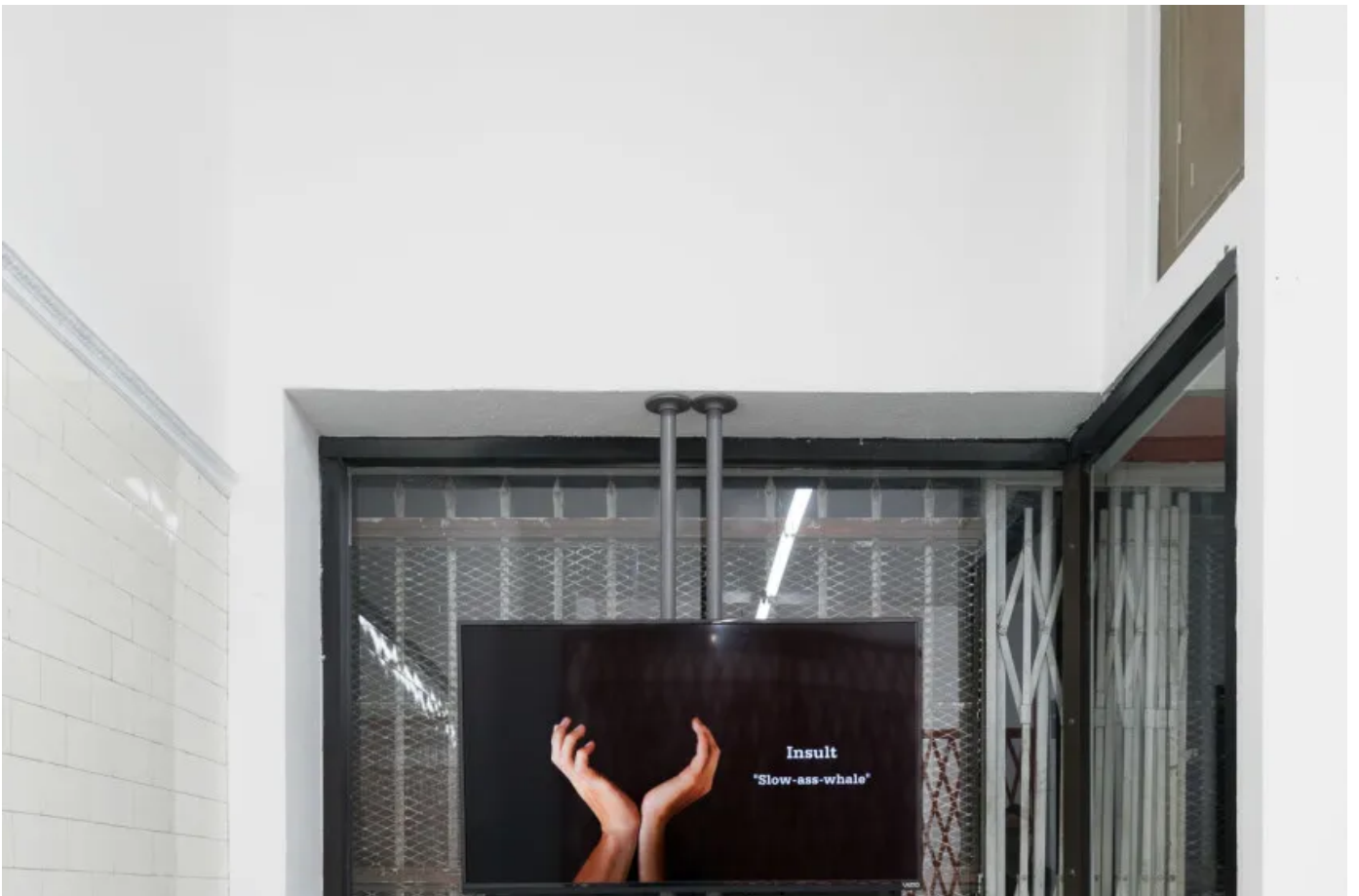
Open to the Public runs from October 23–November 28, 2015 at [VACANCY](http://vacancy.com) (2524 ½ James M. Wood Blvd., Los Angeles 90006)



Brody Albert and Kaeleen Wescoat-O'Neill, *Nothere.la* (2015). Website, hosted on vacancy.com from Oct. 23 – Nov. 28. Image courtesy of the artists and VACANCY.



Brody Albert and Kaeleen Wescoat-O'Neill, *Anti-slip Gum* (2015), Vermont Ave. at Hollywood Blvd. Safety Tape, dimensions variable. Image courtesy of the artists and VACANCY.





Brody Albert and Kaeleen Wescoat-O'Neill, *Driving in Los Angeles: The Fine Art of the Gesture* (2015). HD video, 7 mins. Image courtesy of the artists and VACANCY.



Brody Albert and Kaeleen Wescoat-O'Neill, *Open to the Public* (installation view) (2015). Image courtesy of the artists and VACANCY.