

## FIRST LOOK



*Symbol Face #1 (Colored)*, 2012, oil block print on silkscreen on plastic, 44½ by 34 inches. Courtesy Albus Greenspon, New York.

# Adriana Lara

by Kayla Guthrie

IN SEVERAL LARGE WORKS, a black-and-white image of a woman's face appears printed on clear plastic wrapped around wood stretchers. Keyboard symbols—! % @ & \*—are superimposed on her features as she poses: looking skyward as if praying; gazing at the camera hypnotically; cool and unsmiling like a French New Wave actress. The press release for the show, “NY – USA,” which appeared this winter at Albus Greenspon and was the first New York solo by the Mexican artist Adriana Lara, identifies the woman as a “marginally successful” 1930s Mexican actress.

Part of the ongoing series “Symbol Faces,” the works at Albus Greenspon were accompanied by *Interesting Theory #11b* (2012), a line drawing in black paint on a large expanse of white raffia, the fiber commonly used to make hula skirts. The artist has used this material before, most prominently in her winter 2012 show “La pintura (lasser) moderna” at House of Gaga in Mexico City, wherein these “wearable paintings,” featured in a “fashion show,” were accessorized

with CDs, cheap cell phones and other trashy-chic junk, and worn by both male and female models.

This New York solo debut followed nearly 10 years of projects with Lara's curatorial group Perros Negros and solo exhibitions at venues such as Air de Paris, Artpace San Antonio and the Utah Museum of Fine Arts. She appeared in the 2009 group exhibition “Younger Than Jesus” at New York's New Museum and was featured at Documenta 13.

Lara's videos, sculptures, installations and performances are often driven by critique or research. The works that were shown at Albus Greenspon explore the interactions between a finite selection—a closed system—of graphic or thematic motifs. In a way, their limited elements reflect the confined psychic space of the New York art market. Lara's practice, with its far-flung and collaborative activities, has an intelligence beyond that object-based economy. At the same time, she produces artworks that are strikingly fluent in the formalist language of sculpture and painting currently at that market's heart. ○

COMING SOON  
Lara will be  
highlighted by  
Air de Paris at the  
ARCO Madrid art  
fair, Feb. 13-17.

KAYLA GUTHRIE  
is a musician, artist  
and writer living in  
New York.