

Artist Resources – Alex Da Corte (American, b. 1980)

[Da Corte's website](#)

Da Corte at [Karma Gallery, New York](#)

Da Corte at the [David Risley Gallery, Copenhagen](#)

Da Corte discussed his attraction to found objects, costume, and how he fell in love with contemporary art in a [2014 video interview](#) in his Philadelphia studio. “Being a creator, some sort of inventor of things, you have to willing to go into a place of delusion, because there’s not always a function or a reason for what we do. We have to put aside logic sometimes in order to go into the weirder parts of our brain. But I think my work is about dancing around that delusion.”

“Color is always operating on the way we feel. We navigate these public spaces in relationship to patterns, architectural structures, and colors of the spaces. ”, Da Corte tells [The Brooklyn Rail](#) in a 2015 interview about his relationship to color, space, and appropriated objects, realized in a multi-room haunted house installation at [Luxembourg & Dayan Gallery](#) in New York.

In 2016, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art honored Da Corte with his first museum survey, [Free Roses](#), at just 35 years old. Ten years of paintings, sculpture, and video work provided context for a new immersive installation, *A Season in Hell*, which later visited the [Hammer Museum in LA](#).

[Art21 followed Da Corte](#) as he produced a series of fifty-seven videos dedicated to his love of television and movies for the [2018 Carnegie International](#). “When I’m attracted to a certain character, it may just a character that’s misunderstood or has a beautiful color,” Da Corte reflects, in costume as the Sesame Street character, Big Bird. “In these videos, I flatten the hierarchy to take away the privilege or the authority that these characters may have had and confuse them a little bit.”



Da Corte in his Philadelphia studio, 2016
Photograph: Jauhien Sasnou



Da Corte, 2016
Photograph: Teddy Wolff

“My interest in immersive spaces or immersive color came out of a resistance to the market or that one idea couldn’t be summed up or isolated in an object... To expand upon an object, color the floor, color the walls, it’s a way to resist this singularity or a kind of monolithic preaching, to make it more democratic,” Da Corte reflects in a 2019 [conversation at the Whitney](#).

[The Washington Post](#) spoke with Da Corte as he prepared for his installation for the [2019 Venice Biennale](#). “I think the work is like a large sandwich of experience and thoughts, layered and stacked and stitched together...My hope is that the Gesamtkunstwerk oscillates between a portrait of the macro and the micro and bridges a gap between the two.”

Da Corte’s 2020 exhibition, [The Dreamer of Houses](#), at the Dallas Art Museum gives viewers the opportunity to step inside the artist’s imagination with larger-than-life neon installations . [View the virtual gallery](#) and explore the digital resources.



Alex Da Corte (American, b. 1980)

The Edge, 2020

Wood frame, plexiglass, acrylic paint, sequin pins, foam, velvet, hardware

Private Collection; L2020:34.2

Alex Da Corte sees himself as a creative anthropologist, mining what he refers to as “the artifacts” of contemporary culture “before they gather too much dust or get buried in our past...to reconsider them in the moment they’re being considered.” Art history, pop culture, and commercial media merge in mixed-media paintings and surreal video installations, in which Da Corte costumes himself as cultural icons like Big Bird, Mr. Rogers, and the rapper Eminem. His work frequently straddles the boundary between nostalgia and kitsch, familiar and other-worldly.

The Edge evokes a scene from the children’s television show, *Sesame Street*, featuring an off-kilter vision of the classic Muppet character, Elmo, who debuted in 1980. The fully realized cartoon shows off Da Corte’s technical skill, the remnant of childhood dreams of becoming a Disney animator. His use of intense color, patterning, and familiar icons highlights an uneasy parallel between commercial media and television programs meant to foster curiosity in children. “How do I know my life? My politics? My religion? How do I know my love?” Da Corte asked in 2018. “Mostly I probably learned it from tv. If I were to make a portrait of a place, maybe I’d begin with tv.”

On view July 8 – October 11, 2020