

# AMEXICA

*With works from the Servais Family Collection*

AMEXICA is the result of a triple encounter. First, that of a Belgian art collector with a country full of life and its generous and courageous people; then that between this collector, Alain Servais, and the Mexican writer and curator, Marisol Rodríguez; and finally, that of the curator and the Cultural Institute of Mexico, united by the will to reveal and promote contemporary Mexican artists on the international scene.

Alain Servais first visited Mexico City over two decades ago. Over the years, he has built up an extensive sample of contemporary Mexican art that steps outside the mainstream. In his own words, "collectors in Mexico tend to stick to the same group of names, not daring to follow their own path". Servais' choice was to go beyond this conservatism, led by his fascination for Mexican storytelling and the strong presence of everyday life realities in its contemporary art. Today, The Servais Family Collection traces important Mexican artistic explorations that challenge preconceptions of popular culture and notions of good and bad taste, ironizing about the normalization of disturbing practices such as racism, violence, and the obscure effects of neoliberalism.

In 2019, Servais invited Marisol Rodríguez to explore the collection to bring Mexico to the forefront in an exhibition. First presented in Brussels and then adapted for Paris, AMEXICA brings together the work of thirteen artists with diverse trajectories. In the following rooms, the works of artists who have just graduated from art school rub shoulders with those of some of the country's most acclaimed contemporary artists.

AMEXICA borrows its title from an eponymous work of investigative journalism in which Ed Vulliamy describes the territory that stretches from Central America to North America, passing through Mexico. Traced in 1994 with the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement, this space is defined by severe contradictions arising from the economic relations between Mexico and its northern neighbors. In AMEXICA, Marisol Rodríguez reflects on her generation's experience of dramatic national change, from the cultural and economic protectionism of the eighties to the consumerism, fast-paced capitalism, and extractivism of our globalized age. The artworks that conform this exhibition are imbued with acid humor, lucidity and boldness that offer a glimpse on a collective disturbance whose overall effects are still to be defined.

The Cultural Institute of Mexico is pleased to welcome The

Servais Family Collection and its rich diversity of visions on Mexican contemporary art. We hope that this selection further incites your curiosity for emerging artistic proposals in a complex and changing socio-economic global context.

**Artists:** Víctor Alvarado alias El Chico Paletas, Morelos León Celís, Fabián Chairez, Renato Garza Cervera, Emilia García, Fritzia Irizar, Teresa Margolles, Federico Martínez, Yoshua Okón, Daniela Rossell, Andrew Roberts, Naomi Rincón Gallardo et Héctor Zamora.

**Opening, Thursday April 20th, from 6pm - 9 pm**  
In presence of the curator and the collector Alain Servais

**Exhibition from April 21 - June 15, 2023**  
Monday - Friday, 10am - 1pm / 2pm - 6pm  
Saturday from 3pm - 7pm  
Free entrance

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"Gain as much as you want"

Víctor Abundis Alvarado aka El chico paletas  
Candy World, 2021

Video, 3m 42s

English and French subtitles, color, sound

Urethane resin and UVO pigments with XTC-3D topcoat

Variable dimensions

The work of Victor Alvarado, a.k.a. El chico paletas, catches the attention of passers-by on rue vieille du temple, a central street of old Paris, today lined with fashion boutiques. The language of the shop window is familiar to this artist *mementpreneur*, expert in the paradigmatic self-exploitation of our time: he is a strategist, marketer, creative, technician, producer, communicator and salesman without EVER losing his smile. Carrier of the *comic chromosome*, Victor expresses himself with emojis and he easily transforms his ideas into caustic memes that appear all over the exhibition space as an insistent advertisement from which the algorithm does not let us escape.

The form his work takes is that of familiar Mexican candies modified to suggest phrases around self-exploitation, injustice and precariousness, questioning the promise of a "candy world".

Alain Servais discovered his work at Biquini Wax, an important and dynamic artist-run space in Mexico City. Victor explained to him that he was disturbed that now that he just finished art school, he felt compelled by the system, including the art market, to produce "eye candies", works with a lot of seduction and very little content. Victor therefore decided to create this entire colourful and seductive installation and Alain recognized the universality of Victor's message in an art market more and more deeply separated between cultural and commercial value. The form his work takes is that of familiar Mexican candies modified to suggest phrases around self-exploitation, injustice and precariousness, questioning the promise of a "candy world".

In the artist's own words, "If this false neoliberal promise forces us to build a self-managed and independent subject that adscribes to the description of the neoliberal entrepreneur, this project leads the premise of turning ourselves into an integral entertainment company

to absurdity, using creative work to signal the inconsistencies of trying to adhere to these regulations, and the multiple crisis that arise when trying to live and survive the art world."

Some phrases in Victor Alvarado's candy-like sculptures include: "Gain as much as you like", "2 years of experience", "Damn poverty", and "I no longer want to be an adult".

Victor Alvarado aka El chico paletas  
Mexico City, 1995

Victor Alvarado aka El chico paletas plays with the Mexican imaginary of the 90's and 2000's, subverting it to question the false neoliberal promise present in the creative industries. He is a Master in Visual Arts with specialization in Art and Environment by the Postgraduate in Arts and Design UNAM, he studied the Bachelor of Visual Arts at ENPEG La Esmeralda. She has 4 solo exhibitions in spaces of the CDMX as Biquini Wax EPS, TACO Talleres de Arte Contemporáneo and La Celda Contemporánea at UCSJ. More than 15 group exhibitions in physical and digital spaces. Participated in the second art week inside it within the guest program of the Material Vol. 8 Art Fair, in the space Radio28, curated by Save The Artist and RGE, the BADA 2020 Art Fair at Campo Marte, representing the ENPEG "La Esmeralda" and the first edition of the FAIN 2019 Art Fair at the Recinto Escandón with the organization of the Casa Equis gallery.

Victor Alvarado aka El chico paletas: @elchicopaletas



Morelos León Celís  
Ilhuicamina, 2015

Petate (braided palm leaf), metallic hook, arrows  
Variable dimensions

Ilhuicamina is part of the Materia Solar project carried out by León Celís in the Mixtec region of Oaxaca in Mexico. The works that make up the project address the symbolic representations of the Sun as a common material among Mesoamerican societies. This piece specifically addresses the pre-Hispanic symbolism of Moctezuma-Ilhuicamina, which in Nahuatl means Arrow of the Sky (Ihuicatl: sky and Mina: arrow), and also refers to the Mixtec mythology around the character of the Arrow of the Sun or Yacoñooy. From the intervention and appropriation of materials from rural Mexico, the artist seeks to develop an ethic of the objects of each territory, through a balance between poetry and politics. The artist's critical intention is based on the use of handmade materials along with mass-produced and industrially produced objects, which implicitly reflect on art and craftsmanship today and what they represent economically and culturally for Mexico.

Alain Servais loved the way Morelos León Celís was opening him up to an incredible and infinite Mexican culture and traditions with some many stories to tell through materials directly originated in daily life, as is the case of the basic material in this work. Known as a "petate" since ancient times, the rectangular or square mat of braided palm-leaves that is at the center of this work has been used traditionally as a support to sleep under any circumstance. It is also known that until the XXth century, petates were used to wrap the bodies of the deceased. The petate was thus used throughout someone's life, from the cradle to the grave.

Morelos León Celís  
Oaxaca, 1981

Based on inquiries into the concepts of origin and history, Morelos León Celís develops projects around specific situations, topics, spaces and territories; the elaboration of sculptures, paintings and video installations that constitute his artistic work are a consequence of his profile as a research artist, in which he situates his creative practice. His work focuses on the observation and study of the interstice, that is, the space between two parts of the same body; interstices where the artist activates processes and strategies of intervention and appropriation of symbolic and iconographic materials from rural or peripheral regions to establish a series of intersections between the artisanal and the industrial, the personal and the political.

Morelos León Celís: [@morelosleoncelis](https://www.instagram.com/morelosleoncelis)



Fabián Chairez  
La Revolución, 2014

Oil on canvas  
150 x 100 cm

Fabián Chairez's painting travels through the history of Mexican art, from the novel costumbrismo of Saturnino Herrán, to the modern allegories of Daniel Lezama, to the sensuality with which Jesús Helguera popularized national myths in the Galas de Mexico calendars. With these influences, seasoned with the unapologetic expression of his own sexual identity, he constructs a sinfully figurative, powerful and provocative work.

La Revolución, a 2014 oil painting, portrays a vulnerable Emiliano Zapata: naked, mounted on a white stallion that he elegantly dominates, his heels culminating in barrels of revolvers that lead the gaze towards the animal's erect penis.

Becoming an icon of the gay community since its creation, the image captures the attention of curator Luis Vargas Santiago, who in 2019 includes it in the exhibition Emiliano Zapata after Zapata at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City.

The controversy erupts after a group of peasants seeking an audience in the nearby Congress of the Union used the painting to, supposedly, draw the attention of the legislators who until then ignored them in the open. But the controversy took on a life of its own. The result of its passage through social media are dozens of journalistic notes, between candid reflections and outright sensationalism, institutional statements in defense of the work and a dose of death threats for the artist.

The gaffe, in all its revealing and bittersweet folklore, does not get the piece censored, but it does serve to make the artist assume the deep essence of his work: the questioning of discriminatory power and the subversion of the fragile sensibility of the Mexican macho through his sensual paintings.

It is this controversial episode that Alain Servais wanted to preserve as it underlined the cultural tensions still crossing Mexican society, like most societies dealing with urban vs rural divides in the world.

It makes sense that no Mexican collector would have wanted to appear to support the controversy, but a foreigner could preserve it while it gets into Mexican history as a symbol or not.

Fabián Cháirez  
Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, 1987

His work is oriented to the alternative representation of masculinity. The subject matter of Cháirez's work revolves around the male body and the LGBT world, especially a body that escapes the stereotypes or archetypes of Mexican virility. Chairez attempts to respond to the hostile environment of sexual diversity by using Mexican archetypes, such as wrestlers, charros, Mara Salvatrucha, etc., showing these characters in suggestive and eroticized postures. In 2015 his exhibition El jardín de las delicias at the José María Velasco Gallery presented 30 pieces, including oil paintings, graphic work and illustration. Fabián Chairez: @fabian\_chairez





Renato Garza Cervera  
De Genuina Fiera Contemporánea (Religiosa), 2005

polyester resin, leather, acrylic enamel, glass,  
wax pencil, oil  
30 x 150 x 210 cm

Renato Garza Cervera challenges us instantly with his work "De genuina fieria contemporánea (religiosa)", a sculpture that resembles the body of a flayed gang member who watches us from the ground. Although physically disarmed, his gaze is enough to threaten us. His entire body unfolded outwards with the exception of its genitals, is at our feet. His back is completely vulnerable with the skin full of tattoos from the Mara Barrio 18, one of the main gangs in Central America and the main rival of the Mara Salvatrucha. The title of the work indicates the nature of this abject body: we are in the presence of a beast, a wild animal, not a human.

In the words of Julia Kristeva, it is not the lack of cleanliness that causes the abjection, but what disturbs the identity, the system, the order. That which does not respect borders, positions, rules... It is the body of the Other that we look down on, the body condemned for its transgression, irredeemable in our imagination.

Simultaneous portrait of all and no gang members, this skin is the false trophy of a hunting that, despise much death, has no end, one that never reaches its climax. Today the gangs and their violence initiated by immigrants on the streets of Los Angeles and imported to Central America thanks to the deportation policy of the United States in the 90s, infect the veins of this vast territory of Amexica in which the value of life fluctuates with lightness.

Here, we can examine this fake dissected body that we have labeled as savage and read the life that is hidden in the drawings that illustrate its skin: love, hate, identity, betrayal, violence, survival. For an instant, the beast becomes human, and for an instant, we can get close to him.

"Indeed when anyone is not scared by social pressure, public authority or even death he or she becomes a beast their compatriots and this extend not only to Mexico but also to Berlin or other cities in the world. But it is in Berlin that I once encountered in the subway a group of punk skinheads that obviously had no care for the "normal" people present. I felt very vulnerable as none of the traditional social barriers seemed able to hold them back. Of course in Mexico the threat can be even more serious as most of the Mexican people can be the most generous people in the world but hide among them the most dangerous criminals on the planet.

It is paradoxical that many of the former beasts (lion, tigers, etc) cannot be hunted anymore but those contemporary beasts are not afraid to die and still frighten us to our core." Alain Servais

Renato Garza Cervera  
Mexico City, 1976

Through processes such as transgression, confrontation and hybridization, Renato Garza Cervera's work questions and generates a series of insights into contemporary culture and related political, social and aesthetic issues. By revisiting established ideas that become inoperative, unsustainable or decadent, the critical practices that Garza Cervera proposes and engages with participate in a broader geopolitical series of mechanisms for deconstructing, reconfiguring and redesigning the ethical and cultural heritage. Renato Garza Cervera's work is developed in a wide variety of media including painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, objects and installations, as well as interventions, action pieces and video that have been reviewed, exhibited and collected in Mexico and abroad. Garza Cervera has taught at the Faculty of Arts and Design of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Mexico City, as well as independently at Garza Cervera Taller, Mexico City. He currently teaches at the Academia Nacional de Arte La Esmeralda.

Renato Garza Cervera: @renatogarzacervera



Emilia García  
Who needs followers if you can have lovers?, 2021  
Engraved glass  
26.5 x 25.5 x 8 cm

Head, heart and libido. The three words written in an ornate typography and on a contrasting background is one of many messages posted on the Instagram of Emilia García, an artist who uses the social network as an exhibition platform open 24 hours a day.

Desire runs through her work, whether in these images that use the vocabulary of the aspirational messages inundating social media, in corsets created with materials symbolic of Mexican domesticity, or in glass sculptures on which she engraves the same phrases, using the kitsch aesthetics of the love souvenirs sold in some Mexican public parks.

More interested in the rhetoric of beauty than in the exploration of a single medium or technique, Emilia García captures in different sorts of objects messages that speak of both anxiety and desire, of pleasure and the melancholy provoked by its eternal pursuit, of love and loneliness.

Alain Servais was convinced by the fact that this simple work was building a bridge between Mexican tradition of a certain kitsch and formulas and social media messages he could have found anywhere in the world. Those are the qualities he looks for in a work of art.

Emilia García  
Mexico City

In her work she explores the strategies of corporate branding and self-branding; the relationship of these mechanisms with images, language, their reproduction, circulation and their deployment on different platforms such as Instagram, Youtube, galleries and art institutions. She uses media such as drawing, painting, digital intervention, video, cosmetic materials and marketing language. She has exhibited her work in Biquini Wax, Momoroom, Lagos, Salon Acme, Auckland Art Fair and various independent art spaces in Mexico City. She studied at E.N.P.E.G "La Esmeralda" (2011-2015), works and lives in Mexico City.

Emilia García: @emilia4eva



Fritzia Irizar  
Untitled (Imitation Nature), 2012

Diamond on plinth and documentation  
Diamond : 04 cm  
Photographs: 14.8 x 21 each

"Imitation Nature" consists of a single diamond perched on one of its facets on top of a slender pedestal. The artificial stone that emerges from this column is the product of the chemical synthesis of the hair donated to the artist by people from the malnourished indigenous community of Raramuri indians.

The systematic cornering of the indigenous people to the benefit of the great story of mestizo Mexico is expressed in the form of colorful handicrafts, and other products of folklore made up for tourism, rendering any suffering invisible. In the same way, the artist appropriates the matter of the indigenous body that suffers –and shows almost invisible but indisputable signs of abuse– and transforms it by erasing the ugly: hunger and misery. Purified, definitively removed from the reach of the subjects that allowed its creation, the object can be desired, acquired, and appreciated globally, far from its origin.

An artist of processes that make visible the interstices of value, Fritzia Irizar presents a very serious irony, showing us the abyss between those who starve, and those who may think of something as trivial as turning hair into diamonds.

"I loved the way Fritzia Irizar is describing some very harsh inequities in the Mexican regions and countryside in an inspiring and visually pleasing way.

This region has suffered numerous meteorological challenges which deprived them regularly of sufficient food or drinking. How do you tell such a story outside of a documentary ?

Fritzia took into account that our hair is one of the most precise markers of what our health is going through. In order to gather the archives of this village Fritzia asked the people to cut their hair, the depository of their recent life experience. Fritzia knew also that most of our hair is composed of carbon and that from carbon, an industry would produce an artificial diamond.

She therefore sent those kilos of hair from this village to the company able to transform them in an industrial diamond.

The only leftover of those life stories is this tiny diamond exhibited on this pedestal. If there is a philosophical meaning added to it is that all this suffering is still having an outcome as a beautiful and precious diamond. I was very impressed and touched by the way Fritzia managed to tell such a strong and complex Mexican story in such a direct and eventually beautiful way" Alain Servais

Fritzia Irizar  
Culiacán, Sinaloa, 1977

Fritzia Irizar's work has questioned the value of money and its acquisitive power. Irizar plays with the economic and symbolic revaluation of objects when they pass from their common sphere to become part of art. Likewise, her work shows that history and science are almost fictions, built on tiny plots of knowledge subject to the decisions of a few individuals. However, they are fictions that we wish to sustain: as acts of faith, of belonging, of will or of certainty. Fritzia was awarded the BANCOMER-MACG arte actual 2011 program grant; she was chosen by the commission of the Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO) in the USA in its 2011 awards and commissions program, as well as from the AIR-KREMS residency program in Austria in 2013. In 2016 she completed two residencies: Les Récollets in Paris and Headlands in San Francisco. Recently his work was part of the Mercosur Biennial in Porto Alegre in 2015 (curated by Gaudencio Fidelis).  
Fritzia Irizar: @fritziarizar



Teresa Margolles  
Posthumous messages, 2006

Polyptych of five c-prints, framed  
40.5 x 51 cm each

"The ugly woman, the revolting woman you always hated". 33 years old  
"I asked God to forgive me for never getting to be a good artist. I asked God to forgive me for burning my soul with White Spirit" 25 years old  
"Due to the constant repression and harassment from my family", 19 years old.

"Do not miss me or cry for me. Just imagine That I've gone on a journey and I' will come back." 14 years old.

"I killed her because my friends told me she was cheating on me" 39 years old.

Teresa Margolles (Culiacán, Sinaloa, 1963)  
Posthumous messages, 2006, polyptych of five c-prints, framed, 40.5 x 51 cm each

It is in the morgue that one can really measure the life of a city, as Teresa Margolles has confirmed in various countries in Latin America and Europe. Starting from a residence at the Cabañas Institute of Guadalajara in 2007, Margolles developed the work "Recados Póstumos", a product of her research carried out in the local morgue: in a single year, the city known for its Catholic conservatism reported more than 400 suicides of children, adults and the elderly.

Demarcating herself from previous works in which subjects or reflections on the brutality of reality –at that time characteristically linked to border towns, but now turned into national commonplace– expressed with explicit violence, Margolles created a work in which the human presence is displaced by its word, or more precisely, to the last words of the suicides, amplified and exposed in the canopy of abandoned cinemas.

"Today everyone is a spectator, but only a few are witnesses", wrote Eyal Weizman in an essay published for the exhibition "The Witness" by Teresa Margolles in 2014. Although the powerful body of work around architecture as witness that Margolles would undertake later was still to be developed (the paradigmatic "Esta finca no será demolida" dates to 2009-2013), "Recados Póstumos" already announces the artist's interest in the testimonial value of architecture that, paraphrasing Weizman, works not only as a stage, but as an agent of a war, structuring and organizing life and death around the city.

Back in Guadalajara, an intense blue sky contrasts with the yellowish corner of the decrepit Tonallan cinema. In its canopy, perhaps the hardest of all the messages that make up the work composed of five photographs: Do not miss me or cry for me, pretend that I went on a trip and will return. 14 years.

"Mexico has such a particular relationship to death. Any visitor can feel it, particularly when attending the unforgettable días de muertos. Underlying the Mexican society is also the continuous risk of death that can be "distributed" any hour of any day in any place in Mexico. Teresa Margolles is for me the Mexican artist which most consistently and intelligently exposes this omnipresent death. It is again the case in this incredibly moving series which brought me to tears the first time I saw it. But what decided me to acquire it was the realization that the vast

majority of Mexican people and also collectors were very uncomfortable to be remembered this often very tragic Mexican reality. They prefer to escape from it. I thought it is important to preserve and share this reality for better or worst." Alain Servais

Teresa Margolles  
Culiacán, Sinaloa, 1963

Teresa Margolles' works examines the social causes and consequences of violence. For her, the morgue accurately reflects society, particularly that of her home country where deaths caused by drug-related crimes, poverty, political crisis and the government's inept response has devastated communities. She has developed a unique, restrained language in order to speak for her silenced subjects, the victims discounted as 'collateral damage' of the conflict. Margolles holds a degree in Forensic Medicine and Communication Science from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Her work has been shown internationally in institutions such as Mattatoio, Rome (2021); MUAC, Mexico City (2021); Es Baluard, Palma de Mallorca, Spain (2020); BPS22, Charleroi, Belgium (2019) and many others. Her work is in major institutional collections around the world including Tate Modern, London; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, US; Perez Art Museum, Miami; MACBA, Barcelona

Teresa Margolles: #TeresaMargolles @morcharpentier





Federico Martínez  
Spending money (100 Mexican pesos), 2013

Video, loop, sound  
32m 43s

It takes 32 minutes and 43 seconds to spend 100 Mexican pesos, the equivalent of 3.85 euros. The exact figure comes from the verification made by Federico Martínez in his video "Spending money (100 Mexican pesos)", but instead of spending his hundred-peso bill buying something, Martínez "spent" the money by rubbing it, causing the ink that gives it meaning to be lost in the black background of the video. The money was spent, as the Yucatecans say when something ended or finished completed its mission. Erasing is a strategy that accompanies the history of contemporary art, from Robert Rauschenberg's "Erasing de Kooning" to Oscar Muñoz's "Palimpsest", in which George Orwell's words printed on a sheet of paper are dissolved as by a spell, its remains fixed but illegible, permanently upset on the book page. Although Rauschenberg tests the material limits of conceptual art and Muñoz underlines the nature of a memory that deforms the meaning of his records, Martínez uses erasure to underline the instability of the same material used by Muñoz.

The ink that shapes the word is, in this case, volatile. There is no record of the residue which is lost in the illusion of emptiness that creates an image in which we only see a pair of brown hands executing a subtle and repetitive action. However, while the value of the paper is lost during the action, the very act of creating a monochrome generates its own value by becoming a work of art. The erasure that renews the canvas of value generates its own trap, a kind of ouroboros that underscores the impossibility of escaping from an arbitrary economic system - eternally precarious, as fragile as ink on paper - even if the anchor points that keep it standing are removed.

"Mexicans always had a love and hate relationship with their pesos which has not always been the best store of value for them over the years. I loved the way Federico was showing in a visually arresting way this awkward relationship to the money in his pocket and in every Mexican's pocket." Alain Servais

Federico Martínez Montoya  
Mexico City, 1984

His work derives from the continuous exploration of the everyday urban environment and the way in which spaces construct social and economic relationships. His work reflects on ways of constructing memory and how the body relates to current forms of labor. He works with collective processes with specific social groups that are recorded in video, photography, installation and graphics. Federico Martínez has participated in exhibitions in Quito, Vienna, Brussels, Madrid, New York and Colombia. In Mexico City he exhibited at the Museo del Banco de México (2022) and Galería Breve (2018). He currently works in collective projects such as Museo InVisible Fundidora and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Ecatepec. He has a degree in Graphic Communication Design UAM-Azcapotzalco, studied a Masters in Visual Arts at FAD-UNAM and the SOMA Educational Program.  
Federico Martínez: @malamalapata



Yoshua Okón  
*Canned Laughter*, 2009

Multimedia Installation  
Variable dimensions

“Mexico is infamously known for his maquiladoras, those windowless box factories at the border with the United States where American industrialists take advantage of the cheap, hard working and flexible Mexican workforce to assemble parts imported tax free from the US into finished products like cars or washing machines to be mostly sent back to them.

The working conditions are notoriously harsh for often barely sufficient salaries. It is another symbol of the oppression of raw capitalism often imposed on many Mexicans and Yoshua Okón is definitely one of the best in exposing this reality in an arresting and questioning way with a large dose of irresistible humour which makes his art works a must for me.

For *Canned Laughter*, Yoshua went in an actual maquiladora, the “actors” you find in the videos are actual workers. And his genius was to through an unforgettable spotlight on this oppressive system by inventing a maquiladora called after Bergson, a famous philosopher who wrote extensively about laughter. This factory produces from Mexican workers a product indispensable to the stupid Yankees: the laughters coming from who knows where in any American soap opera to indicate to the viewers where they are supposed to laugh.

The whole installation includes everything necessary including the samples and marketing material to promote this successful maquiladora.

A genius project with everything I love in art”  
Alain Servais

Yoshua Okon  
Mexico City, 1970

His work, like a series of near-sociological experiments executed for the camera, blends staged situations, documentation and improvisation and questions habitual perceptions of reality and truth, selfhood and morality. In 2002 he received an MFA from UCLA with a Fulbright scholarship. His solo shows exhibitions include: Yoshua Okón: Collateral, MUAC, Mexico City and Amparo Museum, Puebla; Yoshua Okón, Ghebaly Gallery, LA; Yoshua Okón: In the Land of Ownership, ASAKUSA Tokyo; Salò Island, UC Irvine, Irvine; Piovra, Kaufmann Repetto, Milan; Poulpe, Mor Charpentier, Paris; Octopus, Cornerhouse, Manchester and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles and SUBTITLE, Städtische Kunsthalle, Munich. His group exhibitions include: Manifesta 11, Zurich; Istanbul Biennale, Istanbul; Gwangju Biennale, Korea; Antes de la resaca, MUAC, Mexico City; Incongruous, Musée Cantonal des Beux-Arts, Lausanne; The Mole’s Horizon, Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels; Mercosur Biennial, Porto Alegre; Amateurs, CCA Wattis; San Francisco; Laughing in a Foreign Language, Hayward Gallery, London; Adaptive Behavior, New Museum, NY and Mexico City: an exhibition about the exchange rates between bodies and values, PS1, MoMA, NY, and Kunstwerke, Berlin. His work is included in the collections of Tate Modern, Hammer Museum, LACMA, Colección Jumex and MUAC, among others.

Yoshua Okón: @yoshuaokon.studio @morcharpentier



Naomi Rincón Gallardo

-Resiliencia Tlacuache (Opossum Resilience), 2019

HD Video 16m 01s

-Hill, 2019

Reed, agave fiber, fur and fabric

110 x 100 x 100 cm

-Lady 9, 2019

Reed, fabric, wig, tin

85 x 50 x 35 cm

-Opposum, 2019

Reed, fur, fabric, papier maché, jícara

65 x 60 x 100 cm

-Agave/Mayahuel, 2019

Reed, ceramic, jícara, metallic paper

120x110x110 cm

Opposum Resilience by Naomi Rincón Gallardo is a fabulation of hacked, or bastardized, myths in which four characters - a cerro (Spanish for hill), a tlacuache (Nahuatl for opossum), la señora 9 caña (incarnation of 9 Hierba, Mixtec deity of the cave) and an agave (the Aztec goddess of the maguey plant)- allow different temporalities to clash: the creation of the Mesoamerican world with our times marked by extraction and dispossession.

The harsh reality of the indigenous peoples in the Oaxacan territory takes the form of an epic, performative narrative that critically points to the break between the natural and the spiritual worlds, a separation that enables the destruction of the whole for the benefit of a few. The simple materials and the handcrafted, almost punk aesthetics with which the sculptures and props used in the video installation are made are poignant in their material modesty and enormous aesthetic and symbolic power.

Inequality and resistance are elevated in this work where urban aesthetics remix with millenary traditions, proposing rebellious forms of struggle.

The work is dedicated to Rosalinda Dionisio, activist, community defender and lawyer from the community of San José del Progreso who has communicated the environmental, social and cultural effects left in its wake by the mining extraction project in the State of Oaxaca.

Naomi Rincón Gallardo

North Carolina, 1979

She is a PhD candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Austria. She studied for a Master's degree in Education: Culture, Language and Identity at the Cross-sectoral-Community Arts department of Goldsmiths University of London. She is a graduate of the National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving "La Esmeralda". Her most recent solo exhibitions include Sangre Pesada, Museo Experimental el Eco (2019); The Formaldehyde Trip, Performance in Progress, at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2017); and Odisea Ocotepc, Filmhaus Kino, at Akademie der Künste der Welt, Cologne, Germany (2014). Her group exhibitions include the X Bienal de Nicaragua, in Managua, Nicaragua (2016); Anticolonial Fantasies, at Friday Exit, Vienna, Austria (2015); and the project Entre utopía y desencanto, at Jardín Borda, Cuernavaca, Mexico (2014). Her work understands research as a transdisciplinary practice and explores the creation of counter-worlds in neo-colonial contexts. Her main lines of research are decolonial and anti-racist feminisms, critical pedagogies, queer theories and speculative fiction. Naomi Rincón Gallardo: #NaomiRincónGallardo @parallel\_oaxaca



Daniela Rossell  
Untitled, from the series Rich and Famous, 1999

C-print, framed  
51 x 61 cm

A modest multiple originally showed the photos that made up the first series of Daniela Rossell's "Rich and Famous" project in 1993. Joined by a screw and a small chain, the photographs encapsulated in plastic exhibited the images of the rich peoples kitsch, mocking their fake grandeur in the very object used to exhibit them: a keychain.

The images showed a picture of Mexican pre-NAFTA opulence: trophy-property decorated like sets from baroque soap operas, skins and dissected exotic animals exposed in improbable ways; women who played with their artificial status, simultaneously infantilized and hyper-sexualized, dolls "representing themselves" as Rossell announced in subsequent exhibitions of the famous series. We do not know to what extent these women - friends of the artist, daughters and wives of PRI politicians as Rossell described in an interview with the SFMOMA in 2015 - self-parody or sincerely express their voluntary participation in the clearly corrupt system of oppression that made their wealth possible. The ambiguity of the images lead Olivier Debroise to classify them as "anomalous", and that's precisely why we cannot decipher how we should locate ourselves with respect to them, their subjects, and what these provoke in us: disbelief, derision, admiration for the artist for making in such a sincere way something so strange and provocative that implicated her, perplexity at the equal measure of dream, nightmare and reality that these biting images show.

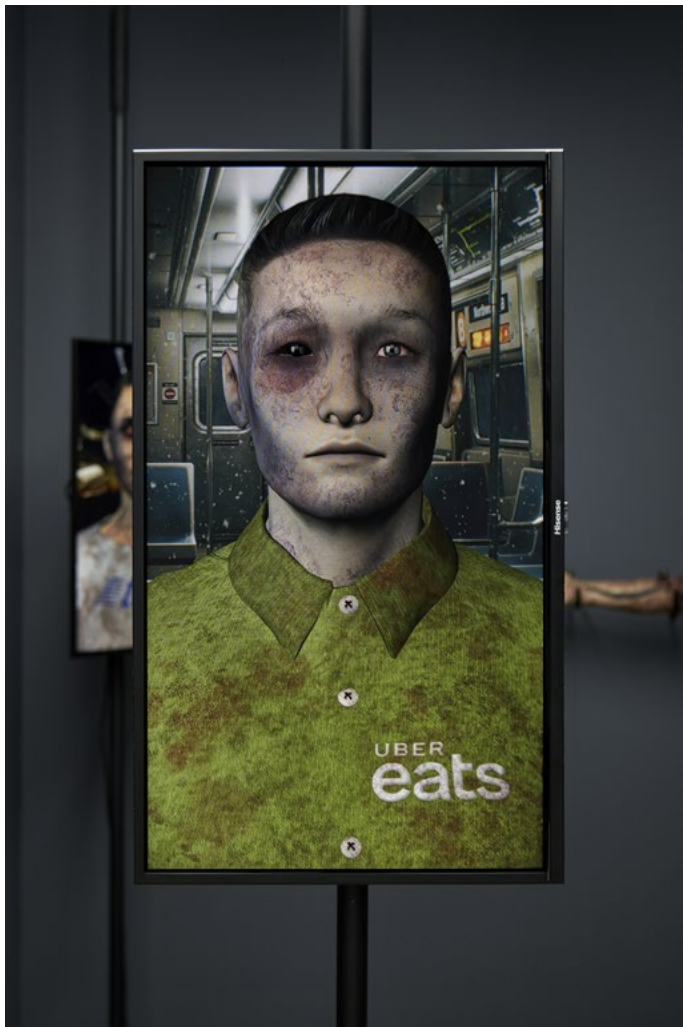
"For me this work is such a wonderful representation of that particular "bad kitsch taste" very present in the Mexican upper classes. I love the fact that this serie was initially considered in mexico like a legitimate documenting endeavour but that it is only after it was shown as caricatural in Spain that it triggered a true shock among the sitters, who suddenly felt ridiculed in what they thought was their norms." Alain Servais

Daniela Rossell  
Mexico City, 1973

Rossell's best-known works are part of his "Rich and Famous" series. Named after a popular telenovela, this group of photographs dates from 1994-2001 and depicts members of the Mexican elite in their homes. Focusing on women from powerful families, Rossell worked with her models to select the setting, poses and clothing for each image. Since Rossell herself belongs to this group, her subjects included family, friends and acquaintances. The series faced serious scrutiny when the entire series of photographs was published as a book in 2002. The wives and daughters of Institutional Revolutionary Party members portrayed in the images were deemed "poster girls for corruption." The public considered the book a visual representation of the unequal distribution of wealth in the country. This series of photographs has been shown internationally and is in important institutional collections such as MoMA in New York or the Tate in London.

Daniela Rossell: #DanielaRossell





Andrew Roberts (Tijuana, 1995)

Reanimator: days gone, 2020

Tattoo on silicone

The Horde, 2020

8 channel HD video installation, variable dimensions, variable durations, color, sound, subtitles in English and Spanglish

The border experience and the effects of NAFTA on the imagination of generations of artists unfolds throughout the exhibition space, but most explicitly in the works by Andrew Roberts that culminate the show.

In the artist's words, "After NAFTA went into effect, the recycled products generated by the American entertainment industry found their way to us in the form of low-resolution television reruns and cheaper second-hand video game consoles, while Tijuana became the main distribution route for illegal weapons and drugs. This environment had a lasting effect on my childhood memories, where cartoons began to blend with the brutality shown daily on the news, and computer shooting games became indistinguishable from my own reality."

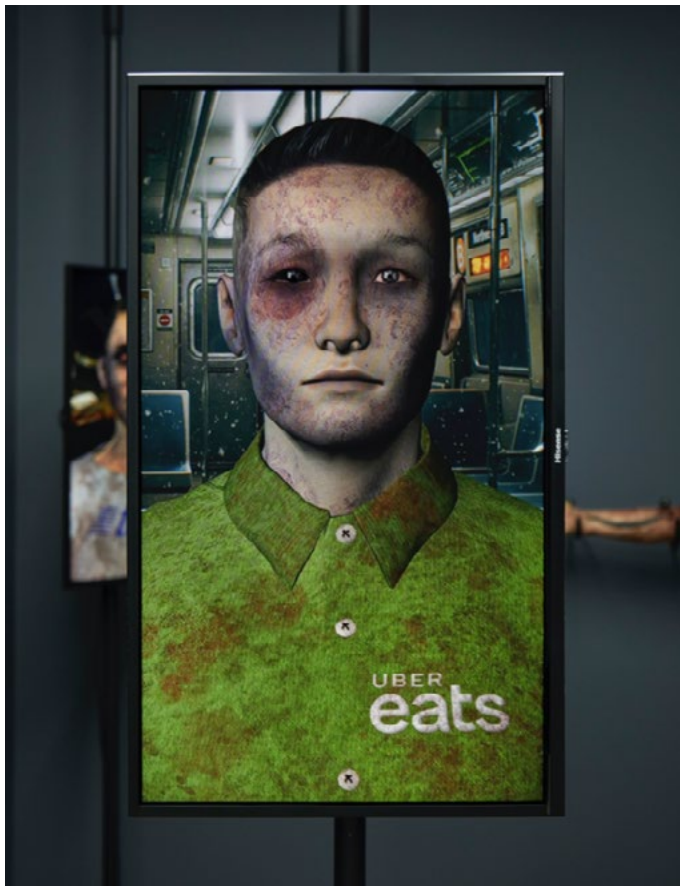
In his work, Roberts develops a sort of neoliberal gore fantasy in which humanity has been avatarized and turned into zombies created to work efficiently for large corporate investors. The works function as a mirror to the canned laughter factory we find on the second floor. However, while Okón's factory of laughter is distinctively Mexican, Roberts' Horde acquires a global character when the artist uniforms each zombie with the t-shirt of different recognized brands around the world (Apple, Amazon, Disney), questioning the viewer by transferring to the here and now (whatever it may be) the violences that are mistakenly believed to be exclusive to remote countries.

Andrew Roberts  
Tijuana, Baja California, 1995

His research begins with a historical exploration on the parallel development of war technology and the entertainment industry, analyzing the role of images as operational weapons in military conflicts and their poetic, political and aesthetic ramifications in the production of capital and death.

His practice takes on the form of multimedia narrative and speculative fiction, materialized across space through digital animations and immersive installations in the company of objects, actions and essayistic writings. He has been part of shows in China, United Kingdom, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Australia, Spain, Mexico and the United States of America in places such as the Best Practice; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; Centro Cultural Tijuana; the Whitstable Biennale of the TATE Modern; Museo Jumex and Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco.

Andrew Roberts: @robertsandrew @pequodco



Poem in Spanglish by Andrew Roberts read by one character in The Horde:

### Headless panchos and disembodied tenchas

While driving through  
the empty roads of Baja California,  
with our Toyota yellow headlamps opening their way across the  
grassy meadows and deserted cerros as our only light path to  
follow the night, the radio station began it's darkest hour.

Ghouls, calacas, demons and rateros haciendo fila, anxious, to  
be part of  
La mano peluda,  
possessing our trip with it's chilling,  
yet entertaining, testimonial horror stories, while my mom was  
behind the wheel  
and myself, a child, to her side,  
perdiéndome, entre la estática de las bocinas, los ocasionales  
letreros luminosos a los laterales y las actuaciones de  
posesiones infernales  
to the rhythm of the accelerating engine, pushing through the  
terracería typical of Tijuana on our way home before midnight,  
porque después de las doce de la noche  
la música norteña es substituída por  
los lamentos de las almas que  
a los latidos de la frontera vagan en pena.

Vatos y doñas con su Resistol en el mismo trapo con el que  
lavarón autos por el día en la línea, morritos y morritas en el  
carro de un gringo giving head for a few green printed pesos,  
headless panchos and disembodied tenchas  
with their image printed as a ghost en el Frontera, or that one  
time a tamalero offered me his meat: "¿te gustan los tamales de  
carne maciza, mijo?" while he tried to slide his mano peluda  
down my school uniform to reach my dick.

En la Zona Norte, en el Cachanillas,  
en el Boulevard 2000, en el Ojo de Agua, con sus cabezas en  
una hielera del Oxxo, with their necks torn apart  
and hung from a bridge in la Cinco y Diez, con sus cuerpos  
mutilados  
dentro de una bolsa en el Cerro Colorado, with their bones  
melted inside acid tinacos at the basement of a house in La  
Gallera, or with his remains found  
in a pit in front of the sea  
before arriving in Rosarito.

Real paranormal sights to deprive our sleep after the sun as  
fallen  
and revealing the streets  
soaked in blood once it rises again  
Radio Formula XEKAM 950 AM  
the radio station número 1  
on method, madness, montage and monsters.



Héctor Zamora  
Solar, 2017

Bricks  
275 cm diameter (largest)

What started with a childhood memory in which the artist sees the dancing shadows of his home's latticework on the white sheets that are drying in the breeze, has seen Hector Zamora turn the basic unit of this architectural element -the brick- into undulating walls, mobile or paradoxically immobile towers -even when they have wheels- and since 2013 into coded messages in which the bricks reveal their semantic possibilities.

An element of traditional housing in various tropical countries, latticework gained international popularity during the 1950s, when its use became widespread in social housing projects, from Mexico to France or India, where Le Corbusier applied the latticework in bricks or concrete (as brise-soleil), under the influence of the future luminaries of Brazilian modernism, who had applied it since the 1920s.

"Solar" is made up of simple elements: three types of intervened bricks, mounted on a wall to form three concentric circles of up to 275 cm in diameter. The work appeals at the same time to the artist's interest in architecture as a totem of modern progress -which appropriates popular knowledge while hiding its origins and the human labor behind it- as well as the interpretation of the brick as a unit in a coded, almost pre-Hispanic language, which we can access only in symbolic terms.

Simultaneously a star, a point, a tunnel, a dome, a labyrinth and a cage, "Solar" is a representation of a dismantled three-dimensional world turned into a timeless message that transports us the same to the cosmos than to the zotihuela\* where Zamora first saw geometric shadows dancing on floating sheets.

\*a backyard surrounded by lattices in which clothes are hung to dry, typical of social housing in Mexico

Héctor Zamora  
Mexico City, 1974

Zamora's work transcends the conventional exhibition space, redefining it, generating frictions between the common roles of public and private, exterior and interior, organic and geometric, wild and methodical, real and imaginary. From his technical expertise, his knowledge of light architecture, and a meticulous emphasis on the process of conceptualization and construction of each piece, Zamora engages the viewer and demands that he or she question the everyday uses of materials and the functions of space. Through determined and often repetitive actions, the artist provokes surprising and unexpected situations. Among his most recent projects, "Chimera" (2023) was realized for Desert X; "Strangler" (2021) was realized for the Bruges Triennale: the monumental scaffolding structure completely envelops a large Austrian pine tree as would Strangler trees growing in tropical rainforests. "Lattice Detour" (2020), a curved terracotta brick wall, was commissioned as a site-specific installation for the rooftop of the Met Museum. Héctor Zamora: #HectorZamora





Andrew Roberts, *The Horde*, 2020, exhibition detail. Photo Sergio López. Courtesy of the artist and Pequod Co.



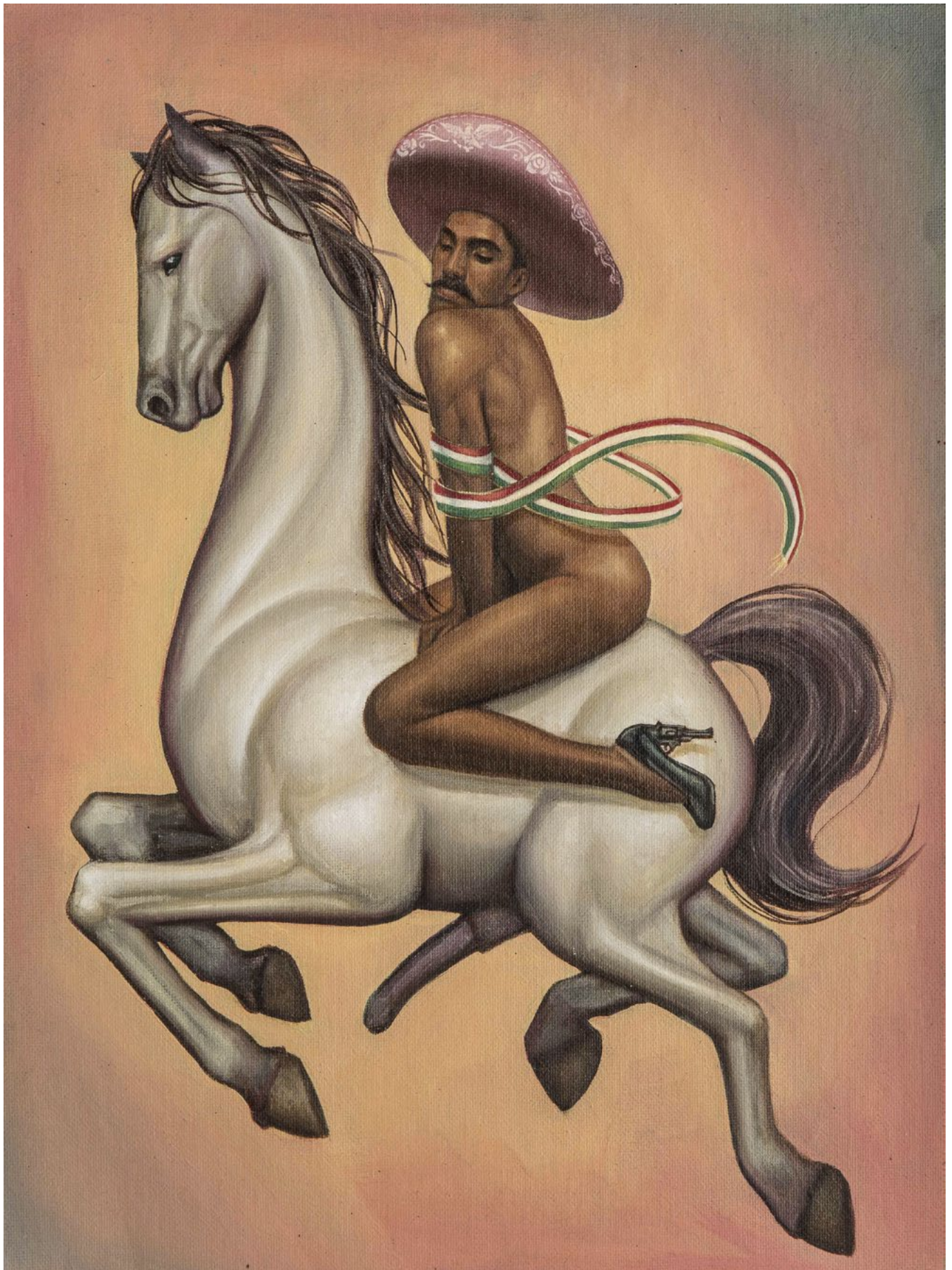


Andrew Roberts, *The Horde*, 2020, detail. Photo Sergio López. Courtesy of the artist and Pequod Co.



Andrew Roberts, REANIMATOR: days gone bye, 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Pequod Co.





Fabián Chariez, La Revolución, 2014. Courtesy of the artist.





Naomi Rincón Gallardo, Resiliencia Tlacuache/ Opossum Resilience. 2019. Photo documentation, Claudia López Terroso. Courtesy of the artist and Parallel Oaxaca.





Yoshua Okón, Canned Laughter, 2011, installation view at The Loft, Brussels. Photo Hugard & Vanoverschelde. Courtesy of the artist and mor charpentier.