

Art Paris 2023

March 30th - April 2nd.

Bodies

The body has become a motive of permanent attention in culture; a reified body is central to contemporary representation, underlining epistemological issues, as well as social and esthetic concerns of today. The body is a construct, as have argued contemporary feminist philosophers. The body -whether scorned or rejected, desired, objectified or alienated-, is described, prescribed, intervened, confirming it as a battleground for thinkers on gender, the construction of practices of aged and sexualized existence and the post-human condition.

It is our interest to present three artists that address the body from different perspectives:

Radenko Milak considers how bodies inhabit and transform space, be it in favelas or modern-day buildings, shaping the landscape and creating immense artificial inhabited structures that sometimes manage to reveal a sense of time and place. His work is a critique of the ethical, social, and spatial practices that have enduring and transformative consequences for society. The urban structures of today are a fantastic collage of technology and design, of human ingenuity in building symbolic domains that speak of



Isabel Gómez Machado. *Tía*, Oil on canvas. 50 x 70cm 2023.

cultures, traditions, and resources. His urban water-colors oscillate between the concepts of design and good taste, place and place-lessness, as exemplified by designers of the modern tropical tradition such as Lina Bo Bardi, and the colossal man-made landscapes that characterize the XXI century cities. Andrés Orjuela scouts urban archives and second-hand images found in flea markets to explore the culture of 'luchadores' or sport-oriented

wrestlers, characterized by their highly aestheticized Mexican masks, bodybuilding activities and play with popular urban myth. Inscribed in his on-going exploration of popular culture, the series 'behind the mask' recreates the images of popular subcultures, where signs and symbols recall the idea of the abject, defined by Julia Kristeva as "a concept ... referring to becoming cast off and separated from norms and rules, especially on the scale of society and morality". These figures of subjective horror, that recall misogyny, homophobia and a general disintegration of personal distinctions and confront us with a repressed corporeal reality, or "an intrusion of the real in the symbolic order". To further disorient the spectator, his found images are enlarged and high-lighted using the traditional 'Marshall's oil paintings, favored by Latin American photographers of the 20th century.

Isabel Gómez Machado follows diverse family albums in search of the representation of private spheres, where the ordinary or commonplace take a new meaning in the representation of anonymous 'homebodies'. Isabel's paintings review the commonplace of every-day life, where the feminine presences reign over domestic landscapes. Intimacy, observation, and poetic representation give us an account of lives apparently lived in total interiority and contemplation, abstract lives concerned with the most trivial and restful existence. The simple acts of the every-day anti-heroism are rendered visible and appetizing in her carefully crafted oil paintings. The essence of her work is a poetic detachment, an overt reference to what lies behind the staged public scenes of



Radenko Milak. Louise Bourgeois, from the serie HER(O)S, watercolor on archer paper. 50 x 70cm, 2023.

contemporary life, as communicated by TV, internet, and magazines. Nevertheless, her work is mischievous and irreverent, choosing to present subjects of all ages and types involved in apparently innocuous situations. The body, ever-present in all its fragility and nudity, is the principal element of interest. In bold colors that recall Gauguin, flat colors, and basic outlined shapes, she brings into collision art-historical references to the body with the intimate objects and people that surround her.

These three artists dwell on the continuities and disruptions in the formal and politically motivated strategies that inform contemporary art and politics, where diverse interests collide head-front on the issue of individuality, self-determination, and

difference. While providing an intense look at the contemporary body, in what Mario Perniola signals as shadows of the real world that reveal, “in a movement of extreme realism, the meeting place between human and machine, organic and inorganic, natural and artificial, impulse and electronics, people and commodities, and in consequence... the process of alienation and estrangement that constitutes the motor of modernity”.

Ana Patricia Gómez
Director



Andrés Orjuela. *Megalodón II*, Stock photography copy in cotton paper, iluminated with Marshall Oils. 55 x 42cm, 2023.