

and/or desire as object: the unconscious, which is determined by a symbolic order.

In a complex interplay of social relations and real framings, this show delves into a complex set of interrogations. Who are the others? All of humanity.

SUSANA SULIC

Guadalupe Maravilla Mor Charpentier

La alegría del fuego (The Joy of Fire) was the title of Guadalupe Maravilla's exhibition at Mor Charpentier Gallery in Paris, held from October 7 through November 18, 2023.

Guadalupe Maravilla, whose birth name was Irvin Morazán, was born in El Salvador in 1976 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. His practice is based on the historical and contemporary context of migrant culture, particularly in relation to Latin America.

With his collaborative actions and performances, Maravilla traces the history of his own journeys and echoes the itinerary of his migration, the two years and three months that passed between him leaving his native country, aged 8, to his being reunited with his parents in the United States. This specific topic is reflected in *January 1984 Retablo (twin)*, from 2023, oil on tin, cotton, glue, and found objects, 244 x 163 x 52 cm, where the artist depicts himself surrounded by the components of his own mythology.

In works like *El tren del maíz* (The Corn Train), made in carved volcanic rock, and *Bless You Magic Woman Retablo (twin)*, Maravilla combines elements that have been part of Central American culture since the colonial era with aspects of his personal travails.

Guadalupe Maravilla. *January 1984 Retablo (twin)*, 2023. Oil on tin, cotton, glue, and found objects. 96 1/16 x 64 11/64 x 20 15/32 in. (244 x 163 x 52 cm). Photo: Eric Simon. Courtesy of the artist and the Galerie Mor Charpentier - Paris ©



The artist reached the United States with the earliest wave of unaccompanied undocumented minors arriving at the southern border in the 1980s as a result of the civil war in El Salvador. He became a US citizen in 2016 and adopted the symbolic name of Guadalupe Maravilla: Guadalupe because he was born on the day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Maravilla ("Marvel") in solidarity with his undocumented migrant father. He was the first member of his family to obtain a Fine Arts degree from the School of Visual Arts and also holds a master's from Hunter College, both in New York City.

Guadalupe Maravilla nurtures collective narratives of trauma and explores how trauma manifests in the body using a variety of techniques and resources. He reflects on his own battle against cancer in a five-piece set: *Volcanic Flame Emoji*, *Solidaridad volcánica* (Volcanic Solidarity), *Mochila inmigrante IX* (Immigrant Backpack IX), *Con mucha suerte* (With Great Luck), and *Intestino volcánico* (Volcanic Intestine).

Including in his work materials collected in various Central American sites, he creates a kind of sanctuary, with the plant-like or hybrid shapes of an internal, corporeal fauna and those of its spiritual, cosmic counterpart complementing each other. Ultimately, large-scale sculptures like *Lanzadores de enfermedades* (*Disease Throwers*) are symbols of renewal, as is fire in *Pierna de serpiente* (Snake Leg), made in metal, wood, cotton, glue, plastic, luffa sponge, and found objects. Those plant shapes are connected to the spirits and to the process of ignition. They are conceived as "healing devices" that operate through sound vibrations, therapeutic in character. Maravilla tells us that "now that I have learned to heal myself, I must teach others how to do it." In that way, sculptural forms, performance, and ritual are intimately connected. Those are some of the elements found in this stunning selection of works, along with a similitude to Chac Mool figures, for example, in *El tiburón bus* (The Bus Shark, 2023, sculpted volcanic rock, 24 x 57 x 24 cm).

In the heavens, the god of fire is identified with the Sun, an analogy that can be extended to the concepts of cooking and maturation, motifs found in the paintings and representations made by local craftsmen. Ancestral corn and cooking traditions are topics of Maravilla's *Retablos* that also appear in the imagery made by local artisans, which Maravilla incorporates into his works.

The 30-minute digital video *Mariposa relámpago* (Lightning Butterfly) tells the story of how the sculpture of that title was created, from its start as a model through its transformation and its performance tour. In the early scenes, a priest starts a ritual, lights a fire, and calls out to Huehuetéotl (in the Nahuatl language, *huēhueh-teōtl*, "god-old"), the generic name of the fire deity. Similarly, he purifies and consecrates times and spaces. Especially in this case, when he ritually restores the social life of a school bus, giving it a new fate.

Ana Holck. *Enroscados V* (Entangled V), 2023. Porcelain and stainless steel. 29 17/32 x 94 31/64 x 3 15/16 in. (75 x 240 x 10 cm). Photo: Pat Kilgore



The fire deity is a center in relation to the cardinal directions, just as the hearth is the center of an indigenous home. Here, as in ancient Greece, it represents human knowledge and the human ability to make autonomous decisions, but at the same time, it signals that which ties human beings to the divine within them and also their connections to others. It relates to one of Central American peoples' oldest concepts, which is directly connected to everyday life. The regeneration of the world is at issue in every one of Guadalupe Maravilla's works and performances; as an element, each consecrates, defines, and ties together the various social, natural, ritual, and mythic cycles and processes.

SUSANA SULIC

RIO DE JANEIRO / BRAZIL

Ana Holck Paço Imperial

Ana Holck's oeuvre consists of a kind of imaginary metropolis that leaps from its architectural dimension to the realm of art by means of shapes that expand from the aesthetic into the spatial. A dialog between architecture and art has long been at the base of Holck's output, and *Enroscados, enroscados e estirados* (Strengthened, Entangled, and Stretched), her exhibition at Rio de Janeiro's Paço Imperial, showcases a new facet of that exploration. Curated by Felipe Scovino, the show features eight previously unreleased works.

Made in porcelain and stainless steel, materials never before explored by the artist, these works skillfully navigate between the domains of painting and sculpture while hewing close to the subjects that have informed her production from the start: the city, the urban space, architecture, and construction. This new phase reflects Holck's development of innovative approaches to the sustained investigation of spatial relationships. Her sculptural paintings, or pictorial sculptures, propose daring movements in space, generating sensations of happenstance and freedom with their curvilinear, intertwining shapes.

The "Enroscados" (Strengthened) series is a set of sculptures resulting from the fortuitous combination of pieces of porcelain tubing manufactured by the artist. A single stainless-steel ribbon inserted into the tubes produces unexpected drawings in space.

The works in the "Enroscados" (Entangled) series are characterized by the repetition of curved modules, with the metallic ribbon completing the circular drawings suggested by the porcelain tubes. These works prompt sensations of fluidity and harmony while at the same time challenging the viewer's perception with their intriguing shapes. "In this series, we have a repetitive, obsessive motion of metal coursing through the tubes as if through a gully, which plays the role of erring, deviating, and breaking the axis. I am interested in the repetition of elements and their organization in space," Holck explains.

The "Estirados" (Stretched) series is closely related to the previous one, albeit featuring linear elements that produce and amplify the tension between the rigidity of the ceramic material and the malleability of metal. Whereas in earlier works, Holck used prefabricated industrial materials such as concrete blocks, bricks, and adhesive vinyl. In this new phase, she has opted to experiment with more flexible materials for the first time. The shift reflects an evolution in her artistic practice, with the introduction of new textures and aesthetic possibilities in her work.

A graduate in architecture and urban planning, Holck brings key issues from those fields into her art but explores them from the perspective of the abstraction and temporality of the architectural experience, deliberately seeking to deconstruct established concepts and embracing the unexpected, the accidental, and the random as creative elements. Her work can be seen as part of Brazilian art's Concrete and Neoconcrete traditions, with features inherited from such relevant figures as Waltércio Caldas and Iole de Freitas that place it in the contemporary space.

Curator Felipe Scovino traces an interesting analogy between Holck's work and the motions of dance, based on the circularity of her gestures and movements in space. Holck's sculptures are revealed as mobile, oscillating forms that seek to transcend the plane in order to reach their own physical space. The fusion of porcelain and stainless steel produces a unique visual tension in her works, where linearity and fluidity combine to generate an intriguing dialog between the tangible and the ephemeral.

However, fascinating the new materials, and incorporating ceramics into the monumental-scale works that have marked her career posed significant challenges for Holck. Her solution was a modular approach that allowed her to expand the scale via pieces that fit together and repeat, with stainless steel as the conjoining agent. This combination results in sculptures that interrogate the viewer's perception and also explore the boundaries between functionality and abstraction, transforming ceramics, usually associated with utilitarian objects, into the medium for a unique artistic expression. In that way, Ana Holck's oeuvre not only transcends the limits of matter and form but also calls into question the very border between architecture and art, leaving an indelible mark, a landscape of her own, on contemporary art.

ALESSANDRA SIMÕES

Nuno Ramos Galeria Anita Schwartz

Nuno Ramos has never been one to abide by the demands of a "pure" language. From wall works that move forward in space (themselves made from the most diverse materials) to installations

Nuno Ramos. *Espectros (Cadeira 17)* [Spectres (Chair 17)], 2023. Installation. Variable dimensions. Photo: Pedro Murad. Courtesy: Galeria Anita Schwartz

