

SPIKE ART MAGAZINE

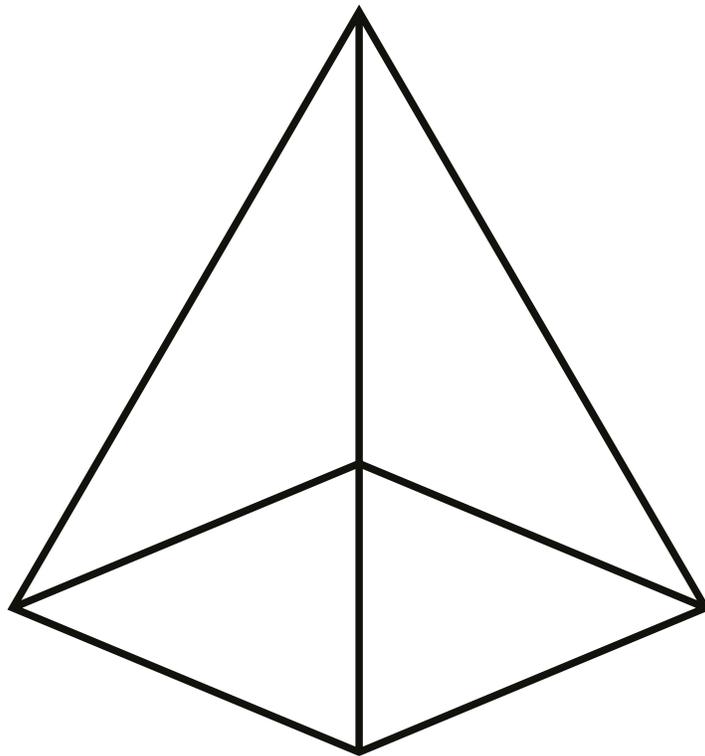
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Summer
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SPIKE

PATRIARCHY



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MEXICO CITY

Work, Friendship, Party

ZONAMACO ART WEEK
VARIOUS LOCATIONS
26 APR – 16 MAY 2021

It is well known as *the* reason so many US Americans have relocated to Mexico City in recent months, but the city's lackadaisical approach to pandemic restrictions shone even more spectacularly in the last week of April during the ZONAMACO-orchestrated Art Week – the Mexican art fair's stand-in event for their usual February offerings that were cancelled this year. With a greenlight state of mind, the local art community and a significant amount of visitors decided it was time to throw caution to the wind. The week-long affair involved gallery circuits in a few of the city's central neighbourhoods, and there were all kinds of openings, not-so-secret parties, a little bit of raving, and lots of accidental, though extremely heartfelt, kissing and hugging.

At Lodos, popular newcomer Samuel Guerrero (*1997) put together "*Destino vas muy rápido*" (Fate you go too fast), a succinct, clever show consisting of three acrylic paintings, a large sculpture, and a short video centred on the idea of chasing a bright celestial

what was promised – in the show, the star is a stand-in for westernised aspirations, the white universal, colonial knowledge, extraction, and consumerism. Guerrero's show dwells on the confusion and disappointment of falling for such mirages. In the two



View of "Samuel Guerrero: Destino vas muy rápido", Lodos Gallery

body in the hopes of revelation. A white and red handmade parachute titled *No caída libre* (No free-fall) (2021) hung over the gallery's ceiling, its strings attached to a modest sculpture of a shooting star made out of aluminium foil. She had landed but was not exactly

paintings *Destinados a seguir estrellas* (Destined to follow stars) and *Estrella Atlas* (Atlas Star [both 2021]), the star is at once the cross-like guiding light of biblical tales and the embodiment of cursed heroism as a white mecha robot taking the place of the Greek titan Atlas holding up the sky.

Similarly precise and otherworldly was Kristin Reger's (*1984) "IUDUIUDUI" at an abandoned movie theatre in the landmark Edificio Ermita. Organised by Rava Projects, the eerie environment was the perfect frame for Reger's latest experiments in fibreglass sculpture. Walking into the pitch-dark rooms to encounter the large pieces hanging in mid-air felt a lot like those scenes in Hollywood sci-fi, characters walk into an extraterrestrial abode only to immediately fall prey to their curiosity, touching everything, absorbing evil spores, or getting impregnated with pernicious life forms. The two pieces, *IUDUIUDUI I* and *II* (both 2021), were two metres tall and simultaneously both menacing



View of "SANGREE: The Dream is Over, The Insect is Awake", Galeria Mascota

MEXICO CITY



View of "Kristin Reger: IUDUIUDUI", Rava Projects

and enchanting. Their long, round shapes, painted in undulating purples, pinks, and blues, appeared symmetrical and intestinal – possible emblems of a human-machinic futurity.

At Galeria Mascota, local duo SANGREE – a collaboration between René Godínez-Pozas (*1986) and Carlos Lara (*1985) – put aside their usual ceramic work and logo-obsessed pre-colonial aesthetics to create "The Dream is Over, The Insect is Awake", a disorienting show of distorted mirrors, ricocheting lights, obsidian, steel, and neon. On the black walls, the exaggerated and instantly readable expressions of cartoon eyes (*Suspicious Refraction*, 2021) illuminated the room with their neon linework, which became squiggly as it reflected on distorted mirrors facing one another on the walls. In the middle of the room stood an obsidian sculpture, *Planipennis* (2021), all blackness and sheen, in a shape that hinted at the morphology of insects as much as a Playstation controller – sensual, curvy, ultra-haptic. It stood on a minimalistic steel pedestal that kept going, turning, and twisting up and down. This mezzanine state of SANGREE seemed to navigate the human obsession with anthropomorphism and

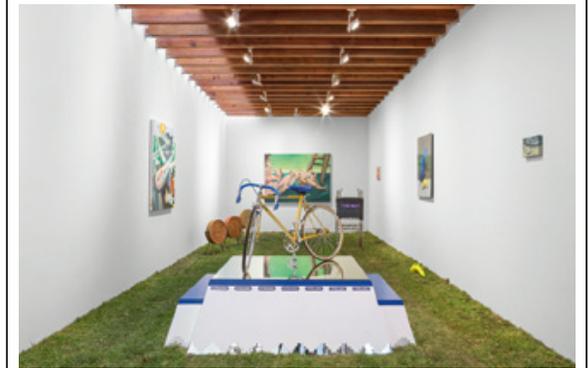
ergonomics, but also the material possibilities of simpler things, like line and light.

Finally, kurimanzutto pushed on with their not-too-inventive pandemic palliative: dividing their airy space into stuffy art-fair cubicles that they lent out to less-established projects and a variety of artists. In its latest iteration, YOPE project space, a young Oaxacan artist collective, presented *Loma Bonita* (Pretty Hill) (2021), which crowded works by all seven of its

members into a booth that could barely make room for another panache. A personal highlight was Julio García Aguilar's (*1993) *Grandes Esperanzas II* (Great Expectations II) (2021): a sad, expressionistic papier-mâché sculpture of an orange creature, mostly limbs, stretching out an arm from behind metal bars, biting on them just to reach a white daisy on the other side just barely out of their grasp – a comment on prison abolition, and perhaps, too, on the depressing nature of all of our self-made confinements.

It was intense and exhilarating to finally go out *en masse* again, to see and be with people even if it was for the perpetually mixed interests of work laced with friendship and party that bemuse us into belonging to the art world. It was also heartening to see local art multiplying again, not without the help of the increased locality that pandemic restrictions imposed upon us; a focus that ultimately forced the hand of galleries and institutions to give a younger, more experimental crowd a worthwhile shot. If anything, the post-pandemic art week experience collectively tilted towards a more righteous balance: less work, more play.

GABY CEPEDA



View of "Loma Bonita", YOPE Project Space at kurimanzutto, 2021