

Gerardo Rocha

*GRIS*

July 18<sup>th</sup> – August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Lodos, Mexico City

GRIS (gray) is the color of obedience, of concrete, of steel; of the beguiling mirrored glass that covers the skyscrapers, forming vertical mercurial lagoons; of discretion, of depression, of storms; of ambiguity, of pause, of the thick layer of pollution that covers each and every one of us. Grey is also the color of Gerardo Rocha's incursion to the corporate universe.

Entering the room, we are greeted by a painting that features the protagonist of any modern city: the pigeon. In front of the painting, and again after it -in it- we see an urban silhouette, the sensual outline of a skyline.

The painting is preceded by a sculpture made of wooden blocks that remind us of a magnified version of the blocks children use to play. *SKYLINE (CDMX?)* is a representation of a landscape akin to Reforma Avenue or Santa Fe, or any financial district in any city. Skyscrapers stand tall, like Gothic churches, reaching for God. But here, God is capital.

The pigeon is funny. It's like the CEO of this world, which Gerardo Rocha sets up for us to fantasize about. Behind the pigeon and between the buildings, men in perfect suits stand in a line. The suits are the same, just a slight color variation. Above the pigeon's head floats a shirt, a nice and starched white button up; a nod to office work. This nostalgic idea of life organized around eight-hour workdays, paid vacations, lunch breaks, and endless meetings.

Zygmunt Bauman speaks of liquid modernity as this becoming that slips through precarious contracts, an ambiguous and uncertain world, life defined by consumption, constant change, and extreme individualization that prevents the proliferation of political imagination or the simple idea of community. He contrasts it with a solid modernity based on institutions, systems, and norms that, whether they worked or not, created a possibility of foresight which no longer exists. Gerardo Rocha finds in the office precisely that inflection point between both modernities.

*Me olvidé de vivir* (I forgot to live) is a large cork board, crammed with cutouts, question marks, deportation letters, pencil scribbles, melancholic messages, layers and layers of overlapping information. Gerardo often uses collage or *dream boards* as tools for exploration. It is very common to find in any office, individual expressions within the limits of each workspace: framed family photos, love letters, drawings made by children, small objects that denote that the person working there has a life outside of the office. This could be a gesture of rebellion or resistance to the aesthetic fascism proposed by these environments. Also, a reminder not to lose oneself.

In the meticulously designed palimpsest, there is also confusion, desires, joy and sadness, photocopies, the word "politics" erased with liquid paper, drawings of anguished office workers holding their heads, on the verge of burnout. A symbolic universe in which individualization is nothing more than the integration of the subject into a magma of desires, goals, needs, and values created by the work system itself. Like a kind of outsourced control service, where hopes and dreams are manipulated. Torrents of unrestrainable human energy, as the individual always tends to seek oneself or to think of an idea of oneself.

The tension between the human and the corporate creates a nostalgic atmosphere that leads us to question the prevalence of the latter over the former. The melancholic martini spilled in *Un sucio para olvidar* (A dirty one to forget), tenderly bids us farewell from this fiction that does not surpass the reality that finds its foundations in it.

-Catalina Berarducci

*Gerardo Rocha* (1992, Mexico City) is an interdisciplinary artist working in various media such as sculpture, drawing, painting, video, and installation. For Rocha, exploring the contemporary visual landscape of the city is opening new windows of understanding and criticism towards the complexity of globalized modernity and the poetics of the spaces we inhabit.

Lodos

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[www.lodosgallery.com](http://www.lodosgallery.com)

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Checklist

Gerardo Rocha  
*Me olvidé de vivir*, 2024  
Mixed media on corkboard and oak wood  
180 x 120 x 16.8 cm  
70 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 47 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 6 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> ins.

Gerardo Rocha  
*The Corporatocene (El Corporatoceno)*, 2024  
Watercolor and acrylic on paper  
71.5 x 100 x 2 cm  
28 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 39 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> ins.

Gerardo Rocha  
*SKYLINE (CDMX?)*, 2024  
Enlarged wooden building blocks  
Dimensions variable

Gerardo Rocha  
*Un sucio para olvidar*, 2024  
Graphite on paper, glass, resin, epoxy clay, oak wood  
30 x 44 x 18 cm  
11 <sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 17 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 7 ins.