

Contemporary
Mexican Art

Sin Título

Contemporary Mexican Art

Curated by Dan Cameron

New Orleans, LA November, 2017

CLOSEST OF STRANGERS

While it is generally a morally dubious proposition to minimize or deflect from the suffering caused by tragedies, it is worthwhile to note that many observers of the destruction caused by the most recent earthquakes in Mexico also commented on the extent to which past experience has mobilized the Mexican citizenry into a rapid-response corp of neighbor-volunteers, who emphasize teamwork and spontaneous collectivity in their humanitarian actions. Those on the ground who participate in such rescue efforts tend to speak about how being in a position to help those who are trapped or injured serves to counteract the unavoidable sense of helplessness when such catastrophes do occur. Witnessing such cooperation, even from a considerable distance, invariably brings to mind images of New Orleans months after Katrina, when neighbors were still digging each other out, and everybody was ready to lend a helping hand to their somebody else. Working side by side with New Orleanians were hundreds of Mexicans, who appeared during the weeks after the flood to do what they could to help.

Along with what can appear to be this boundless national capacity for collective thinking and action in Mexican culture at large, one of the more striking features that tends to emerge in any extended conversation about Mexican contemporary art is that it enjoys the benefits of a coherent visual culture that has flourished for thousands of years. This observation is not intended to discount the devastating impact of the Conquest five centuries ago, or disregard the various political upheavals and ongoing social inequities that conspire even today to prevent many segments of the population from achieving economic parity, but rather to simply acknowledge that in those respects, Mexico is very much like many other countries. In terms of culture, however, there are actually few places in the world where local artistic developments today can be discussed in terms of millennia instead of mere centuries or decades. This is why first-time visitors to the famed Museo de Antropologia in Mexico's capital often leave stunned, having witnessed an unbroken line of artistic development that connects archaeology with contemporary art in a continuous, if not always consistent, trajectory of techniques, forms and meanings.

Such an understanding is a good starting-point for approaching the works in this exhibition, since the relative dominance of the U.S. in matters of global economic power, not to mention the outsized influence of our contemporary art scene, can lure many viewers into a complacent reading of these works as existing primarily in dialogue with art currently being produced in New York and Los Angeles, or perhaps Houston, New Orleans and Miami. What's more likely to be true is that the works on view here were created by artists who see themselves taking part in an international crosscurrent of contemporary ideas that flows from Berlin to Beijing, and from Dubai to Sao Paulo, as opposed to participating a cross-border 'exchange'. It might even be the case that Mexican artists are more likely than their American counterparts to seek affinities for their work outside the North American context altogether. Following this self-positioning within a global conversation, Mexican artists, who as noted are already deeply rooted in the rich cultural traditions of their country, cannot help but be affected by the long shadow of American art and the U.S. art market. But if the proximity to the US influences creative decisions made in those studios in Mexico City, Guadalajara and Tijuana where the artists in Sin Título work, the influence is often not a cautionary one. Seen from the outside, the U.S. art market is not simply formidable — it's also unusually prone to bubbles and over-speculation, and with the cost of living in major American cities skyrocketing, the Mexican art scene has a great deal to offer artists from other countries — including the U.S.

This distinction is an important one, because Mexico City's emergence during the past decade as a bustling meeting-ground of global tastes and ideas means that the artistic exchange between the two countries has become far less one-sided than in the past. Mexican galleries have long participated in prestigious art fairs in Europe and the U.S., but established galleries from New York and Los Angeles now take part in Zona Maco, the boisterous, reasonably-scaled Mexico City art fair, partly because they want Mexican collectors to acquire their artists (especially those from Mexico or the rest of Latin America), but also because they know that reciprocity in the U.S./Mexico relationship — at least where contemporary art is concerned — is such that with Mexican artists already visible and successful on the international stage, to remain uninformed about new Mexican art is to lag behind one's competitors. Adapting to the 21st century template of global art awareness have already presented a challenge for more established American galleries, many of whom built their reputations on the unspoken premise that all pertinent contemporary art is made in the USA. But the clear advantages of such adaptation tend to become more apparent over the course time.

My personal curatorial background is such that I've had the enormous good fortune to collaborate with numerous Mexican artists over the years. Gabriel Orozco's active participation in Cocido y Crudo at the Reina Sofia in 1994 was a memorable way to start, and Minerva Cuevas' street art contribution to the 2003 Istanbul Biennial and Damian Ortega's public sculpture in the 2006 Taipei Biennial helped keep those connections fresh. More recently, the opportunity to showcase the work of Pedro Friedeberg and Gabriel de la Mora within the 2013 California-Pacific Triennial, and to commission new projects from Hugo Crosthwaite and Pablo Rasgado for the Bienal de Cuenca, Ecuador last year has only deepened my interest in the subject. Sin Título even constitutes a return to the city of New Orleans for two of its artists: both Rafael Lozano-Hemmer and Pedro Reyes made important contributions to *Prospect.1 New Orleans* in 2008. Over the years, I've had the opportunity to take numerous research visits to Mexico City, organized an exhibition of Eugenio Lopez's collection at Jumex, and closely followed the careers of numerous Mexican artists around the world, so that when the invitation arose to put together a selection of contemporary artists from Mexico in New Orleans on the occasion of Prospect.4, the biggest obstacle was that there were simply far too many to choose from. Along the way, the active involvement of the Mexican Consulate in New Orleans became a key feature of the undertaking, for which I credit Jonathan Ferrara and Matthew Weldon Showman, who accompanied me on a research trip to Mexico City in September 2016.

Much deserved additional thanks go to the galleries: Proyectos Monclova (Mexico City), bitforms (New York) and Sean Kelly Gallery (New York), and to all of the artists, who have given their time and energy unstintingly to make *Sin Título* a success.

When we talk about talent, Mexicans undoubtedly play an important role in the international context in different aspects of life. Mexican labor and their display of commitment and quality at their work, leaves a mark; the environment and artistic expressions are no exception.

We Mexicans also grow the field to harvest an artichoke in Seaside California, while we also design a database to support Google as did Hector Garcia Molina, Stanford Professor of Larry Page and Sergei Brin. We also cook or own famous restaurants in the world, or translate our feelings and perception of life, in works of art that go around the world astonishing the eyes of millions.

On this occasion as a Mexican, as a diplomat, but mainly as a human being, I am deeply proud to have contributed in showing the talent of these seven wonderful Mexican artists. I would not dare to present their work, nor do I have qualities that allow me to explain their technique, however, my senses awaken just by looking with satisfaction at their work.

On behalf of the Consulate of Mexico in New Orleans, I am thankful for the opportunity to work so that we Mexicans are referred to in their right dimension, this time with a sample of seven talented and recognized artists, whereas these particular seven, are part of a vast universe of options and artistic manifestations in the different disciplines of expression, from the wicker basket woven by local artisans, in a humble community of Oaxaca Mexico; to the Mexican who exhibits at the Modern Museum of Art (MoMA) in New York and is seen all over the world.

Today it is a pleasure for the Mexican Consulate to be able to show in New Orleans, under the Prospect.4 New Orleans framework, the art of these Mexicans who strive with their talent, making it clear that in Mexico there is value in their people, in their work and in addition, in the outpouring of feelings and emotions that are perceived around this exhibition.

I hope it will please all of you and that it will serve as an invitation to visit our country, visit its museums, know its beaches, marvel at its pre-Hispanic and colonial buildings, live their traditions and receive the courtesy and warmth of its people.





Continuing the gallery's program of international exhibitions and cultural exchange projects, we are proud to be collaborating with the Consulate of Mexico in New Orleans to present *Sin Título*, curated by Dan Cameron, in conjunction with Prospect.4 New Orleans. The gallery constantly strives to expand its audience, reach and impact in the art community, and working with such these internationally renowned artists from Mexico reflects that mission.

This first-ever group exhibition of contemporary Mexican art presented in New Orleans is intended to emphasize the rich historical and cultural ties between Mexico and the U.S. -- particularly in the city of New Orleans --, and to educate viewers about the amazing artistic talent emerging on a continual basis from our neighbor to the south.

By presenting the exhibition in two parts -- at the Art Gallery of the Consulate of Mexico and at Jonathan Ferrara Gallery --, we hope to strengthen ties between the two communities in order to showcase this cooperation and reach as many people as possible.

It is an honor to work with Prospect New Orleans founder Dan Cameron, whose vision for an international biennial has been fully realized; and with the Honorable Consul of Mexico, Carlos Ponce. Our collective vision to employ art as the medium for cultural and educational exchange has been embraced by, and takes place with the support of, the Government of Mexico, through whose cooperation we are able to share these renowned artists works with a larger audience.

I truly hope that this exhibition and project will offer a template for furthering artistic and educational collaborations between our countries.

Jonathan Ferrara Gallery Owner



Hugo Crosthwaite



Hugo Crosthwaite was born in Tijuana, Mexico in 1971 and grew up in the tourist-heavy beach town of Rosarito. He graduated from San Diego State University in 1997 with a BA in Applied Arts and Sciences. Currently, Crosthwaite lives and works between Tijuana, Los Angeles, and Brooklyn.

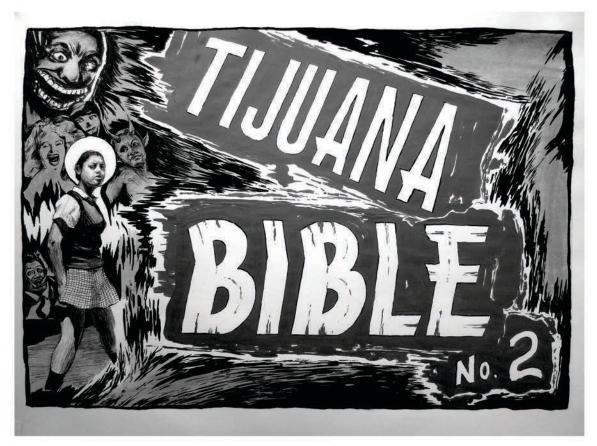
In 2013, Crosthwaite was chosen to represent Mexico in the *California-Pacific Triennial* curated by Dan Cameron. For this exhibition, inspired by the Mexican carpas, traditional tent shows that traveled along the border, he will create a site- specific mixed media installation. He was also included in the Wignall Museum of Contemporary Art's The New World, for which he created a 42 foot mural titled Guadalupana March.

In 2012, Luis De Jesus Los Angeles mounted a solo exhibition, *Tijuanerias*, consisting of 102 drawings and installation exploring Tijuana's "Black Legend" which mythologizes the border city. In the same year, Crosthwaite was featured in several museum exhibitions including The San Diego Museum of Art's *Behold, America!* and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego's *The Very Large Array*.

In 2010, reading a review in Art in America, Richard Harris commissioned Crosthwaite to create the opening work for *Morbid Curiosity: The Richard Harris Collection*. The monumental, 25 x 11 ft. graphite on board drawing, *Death March*, was on view at the Chicago Cultural Center from January - July 2012.

A partial list of Crosthwaite's solo gallery exhibitions include: Dark Dreams- Selected Works 1997-2010, Noel-Baza Fine Art Gallery, San Diego, 2010; Escape Rates Escaparates, Pierogi 2000, Brooklyn, 2009; Hugo Crosthwaite, Mason Murer Fine Art, Atlanta, Georgia, 2008; Maniera Obscura/In a Dark Manner, ArtSpace/Virginia Miller Galleries, Miami, 2005; and Caprichos, Trópico de Nopal Gallery, Los Angeles, 2004.

The artist's work has been included in numerous collective exhibitions throughout the United States and Mexico. Lion Hunt was selected by juror Carter Foster (Curator of Drawings at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art) for inclusion in the 22nd International Juried Show at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey. Untitled (Enfermas Facilmentes), received recognition in La Primera Bienal de Dibujo de las Americas (First Biennial of Drawings in the Americas) Rafael Cauduro Tijuana 2006. Chocadaand Hombre Sobre Mesa were included in the VII Bienal Monterrey FEMSA de Pintura, Escultura e Instalación, in 2005 Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico.



Tijuana Bible No. 2 -- Book Cover



Tijuana Bible No. 1 -- Book Page 4

Jose Dávila

Jose Dávila was born in Guadalajara in 1974. Lives and works in Guadalajara, MX

Jose Dávila's artistic practice is located in the boundaries of the homage, imitation and critique. The artist, formerly trained as an architect, uses different reproduction strategies to dismantle the relation between form and content, as well as manifest the virtues and deficiencies of his references. Introducing a particular interest in Western culture, the imagery comprised within the artist's work is based on a deep approach to Architecture and Art History.

In the last years and under these same precepts, Dávila has developed a series of sculptures whose structural work is based on the arrangement and overlapping of material such as boulders, glass and marble, kept in perfect balance with industrial ratchet straps. The articulation of these elements displays a game of resistance between opposite forces, present throughout all his sculptural work. Frequently, the nature of these materials approaches both, architecture construction as well as formal artistic production, which subscribe his work to principles coined by Minimalism and Arte Povera. Dávila has also manifested a special interest in the use and occupation of space, issues that have been present throughout his career.

His work has been exhibited in Marfa Contemporary, Marfa, USA, Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo MUAC, Mexico City; Caixa Forum, Madrid; MoMA PS1, New York; Kunstwerke, Berlin; San Diego Museum of Art; Museo de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; MAK, Vienna, Fundación/Colección JUMEX, Mexico City; Bass Museum of Art, Miami; Museu do Arte Moderna, Sao Paulo; The Moore Space, Miami; NICC, Antwerp, among others; and has been featured in international publications such as Cream 3, ed. Phaidon, 100 Latin-American Artists, ed. Exit y Megastructures-Reloaded, ed. Hatje Cantz. Dávila has been recipient of support from the Andy Warhol Foundation, a Kunstwerke residency in Berlin and the National Grant by the Mexican Arts Council (FONCA). He is a founder member of Oficina para Proyectos de Arte (OPA), in Guadalajara, Mexico.





A Copy Is a Meta-Original (Fig. 294) XII, 2016 Spray paint on silkscreen print



A Copy Is a Meta-Original (Fig. 52) VI, 2017 Archival pigment print and spray paint

Gabriel de la Mora



Gabriel de la Mora was born in Mexico City in 1968, where he still lives and works. He earned an MFA from Pratt Institute, NY and a BFA in Architecture from Universidad Anáhuac del Norte, Mexico City. His work has been exhibited at solo and group shows in museums and galleries in Mexico, the United States, Canada, Colombia, Brazil, Spain, and the United Kingdom, amongst others. He is represented by Timothy Taylor (London), Sicardi Gallery (Houston), and Proyectos Monclova (Mexico City).

Following a meticulous process, Gabriel de la Mora researches, collects, classifies, catalogues, and manipulates remarkably diverse materials. These materials are familiar, taken from quotidian objects – his ongoing series *The weight of thought* for example, repurposes leather and rubber shoe soles. de la Mora's materials of choice are those often consider waste or residue: collected artifacts and antiques, obsolete mechanical and utilitarian objects, parts, corporeal matter, architectural scrap. Through these, De la Mora explores finitude and permanence, the passing of time, its bracketing, and the transformation of matter and energy alike.

The formal outcome of this process plays with pre-established notions of drawing, painting, and sculpture. Characterized by their visual potency, the works complicate theoretical and historical art terms (the ready-made, the *objet-trouvé*, the monochrome, the *peinture en plein air*). They tackle ironically the abstract and minimalist aesthetic, and inquire on the ever-changing notion of painting as a phenomenon. *Can painting originate itself with the passing of time and without any intervention from the artist's hand?* This apparent negation of painting and other ontological musings formulated by de la Mora's body of work are extended to artistic practice at large: *When is an artwork born and when does it reach its conclusion? What is the role of the artist within the creative act?* Coupled with equally methodical and strict processes, Gabriel de la Mora has constituted a practice in which the role of the artist is not to create nor to destroy, but to transform.



6,358, 2015 6,358 turkey eggshell fragments on wood



*PAI / 9 II f, 2015*Discarded aluminum plates from offset printing press, mounted on wood

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer was born in Mexico City in 1967. In 1989, he received a B.Sc. in Physical Chemistry from Concordia University in Montréal, Canada. As an electronic artist, he develops interactive installations that are at the intersection of architecture and performance art. His main interest is in creating platforms for public participation, by perverting technologies such as robotics, computerized surveillance or telematic networks.

Inspired by phantasmagoria, carnival and animatronics, his light and shadow works are "antimonuments for alien agency". His large-scale interactive installations have been commissioned for events such as the Millennium Celebrations in Mexico City (1999), the Cultural Capital of Europe in Rotterdam (2001), the UN World Summit of Cities in Lyon (2003), the opening of the YCAM Center in Japan (2003), the Expansion of the European Union in Dublin (2004), the memorial for the Tlatelolco Student Massacre in Mexico City (2008), the Winter Olympics in Vancouver (2010), and the pre-opening exhibition of the Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi (2015). Recently the subject of solo exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the MUAC Museum in Mexico City, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, he was the first artist to officially represent Mexico at the Venice Biennale with a solo exhibition at Palazzo Soranzo Van Axel in 2007. He has also shown at Art Biennials and Triennials in Havana, Istanbul, Kochi, Liverpool, Montréal, Moscow, New Orleans, Seville, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore and Sydney.

Collections holding his work include the MoMA in New York, Tate in London, AGO in Toronto, CIFO in Miami, Jumex in Mexico City, DAROS in Zurich, Borusan Contemporary in Istanbul, MUAC in Mexico City, 21st Century Museum of Art in Kanazawa, MAG in Manchester, MUSAC in Leon, MONA in Hobart, ZKM in Karlsruhe, MAC in Montréal and SAM in Singapore, among others. He has received two BAFTA British Academy Awards for Interactive Art in London, a Golden Nica at the Prix Ars Electronica in Austria, "Artist of the year" Rave Award from Wired Magazine, a Rockefeller fellowship, the Trophée des Lumières in Lyon, an International Bauhaus Award in Dessau, the title of Compagnon des Arts et des Lettres du Québec in Quebec, and the Governor General's Award in Canada. He has lectured at Goldsmiths college, the Bartlett school, Princeton, Harvard, UC Berkeley, Cooper Union, USC, MIT MediaLab, Guggenheim Museum, LA MOCA, Netherlands Architecture Institute, Cornell, UPenn, SCAD, Danish Architecture Cente, CCA in Montreal, ICA in London and the Art Institute of Chicago.





Reporters With Borders - Shadow Box 6 Prints 160 x 105 centimeters each - Edition6 copies + 1 AP

Pablo Rasgado



Pablo Rasgado, (Zapopan Jalisco, 1984) His work has been shown at the XIII Cuenca Biennal, EQ (2016); MOCAD, MI (2015); Art Basel, Positions; CH (2014) LACMA, LA (2013); Herzlya Museum of Contemporary Art, IS (2011); La Chambre Blanche, Quebec, CAN (2011); Museo de Arte Moderno, MX 2013); Museo Carrillo Gil, MX (2012 and 2014); Museo Experimental el Eco, MX(2010); Stone House Lagos, Nigeria (2010).

Rasgado has been the recipient of of numerous grants and fellowships, such as: Pollock- Krasner Foundation Grant (2016), FONCA-CONACULTA in (2006, 2010, 2011and 2017); the Mex Am Fellowship (2007) Programa Bancomer-MACG (2012), and has been a resident at Yaddo, NY (2017); Art Omi, NY (2016); The MacDowell Colony, NH (2015); Cite international des arts, FR (2014); Triangle, NY (2012); La Chambre Blanche, CAN (2011) to name a few.

His work is included in various public collections, such as, CCA Wattis, PAMM and Jumex Collection. He lives and works in Mexico.



The unbribable witness of history, 2015 Rebar and concrete - detail



Ojo por diente, 2013 - Detail brick dust, cement dust, and plaster dust extracted from the demolition of one of the rooms at the exhibition space.

Pedro Reyes

Pedro Reyes (b. 1972, Mexico City) has won international attention for large-scale projects that address current social and political issues. Through a varied practice utilizing sculpture, performance, video, and activism, Reyes explores the power of individual and collective organization to incite change through communication, creativity, happiness, and humor.

A socio-political critique of contemporary gun culture is addressed in Reyes's *Palas por Pistolas* (2008), in which the artist worked with local authorities in Culiacán, Mexico, to melt down guns into shovels, intended to plant trees in cities elsewhere in the world. Similarly, in *Disarm* (2013) the Mexican government donated over 6,700 confiscated firearms for Reyes to transform into mechanical musical instruments, which are automated to play a delightful, if surreal loop, retaining the raw emotion of their origination.

Issues of community and compassion are addressed in *Sanatorium*, activated at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2011, dOCUMENTA (13) in Germany in 2012, and in 2014 at The Power Plant in Toronto and The Institute of Contemporary Art in Miami. In this work, visitors are invited to sign up for a 'temporary clinic,' with the mission of treating various kinds of urban malaise. Therapies such as trust-building games and hypnosis are offered to combat common problems such as loneliness and stress, creating a democratization of therapy.

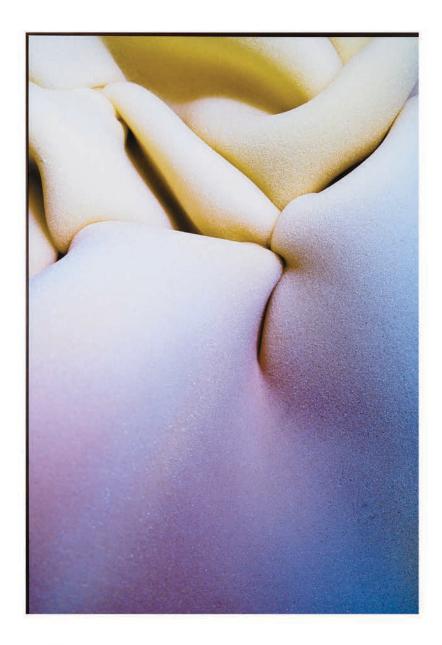
In Fall 2016, Reyes presented *Doomocracy* in the Brooklyn Army Terminal in New York. Organized by Creative Time, the "political house of horrors" was an immersive exhibition marking the confluence of two events haunting the American cultural imagination at the time: Halloween and the 2016 presidential election. Presented in the form of a haunted house, visitors navigated a labyrinth of rooms to explore the complexities of political anxiety, with the intention of fostering dialogue around the contentious state of global politics. Reyes lives and works in Mexico City. He studied architecture at the Ibero-American University in Mexico City.





Disarm (Guitar) 2017 Destroyed weapons, metal parts, strings

Martín Soto Climent



Martin Soto Climent (1977, Mexico City) lives and works in Mexico City. In his practice, Soto Climent sources materials and images mainly from city streets or urban suburbs, to create photographs, sculptures and installations that appear to be ready-mades in their humbleness. Reminiscent of conceptual art strategies like appropriation or juxtaposition, his works are the result of slight re-contextualization and delicate rearrangement. Made from vintage clothes, urban leftovers or collaged photographs, Soto Climent's works appear to be fragile assemblages that explore questions of temporality, desire, decay and marginality.

His sculptures often feature temporary interventions into everyday objects that can be easily returned to their original state. Ideas relating to the concept of folds play a crucial role in the artist's practice as his work is highly adept at drawing out libidinous subtleties of images and objects using minimal gestures.

Together with curator Chris Sharp, Soto Climent founded the independent project space Lulu in Mexico City in 2013 and currently collaborates with blogs and independent initiatives from the international art scene, while preparing his master's degree on photography at the Academia de San Carlos, UNAM.



Marea de espuma, 2015 Piezography on Hahnemühle Canvas Artist Poly-Cotton paper and walnut wood



Espina, 2017
Tights on linen

Sin Título is a groundbreaking Visual Arts exhibition curated by Dan Cameron in collaboration with the Consulate of Mexico in New Orleans and Jonathan Ferrara Gallery. The exhibition is an official satellite exhibition of Prospect.4 New Orleans, the triennial that Cameron founded shortly after Hurricane Katrina. *Sin Título* is the first time a group exhibition of Contemporary Mexican Art is ever presented in New Orleans and the Southeast of the United States.

The exhibition is presented simultaneously at Jonathan Ferrara Gallery and the Art Gallery of the Consulate of Mexico. The featured artists for *Sin Título* are Hugo Crosthwaite, Jose Dávila, Gabriel de la Mora, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Pablo Rasgado, Pedro Reyes and Martín Soto Climent.



The Consulate of Mexico and Jonathan Ferrara Gallery wish to thank the following sponsors for their generous support in the realization of this exhibition:

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