

ASMA

PEANA

ABOUT

ASMA is an artist duo based in CDMX, formed by Matias Armendaris (Ecuador b. 1990) and Hanya Beliá (b. 1994, MX). ASMA's artistic practice focuses on developing work produced exclusively through active collaboration. Their work uses open narratives and architectural spaces exploring formal interrelations between painterly and sculptural expressions. In their collaborative process they explore the act of interaction and how things in contact start affecting each other. In this interrelation, things start erasing their boundaries and begin to fuse, they play with the potential of this process of transformation, both formally and conceptually.

ASMA's recent projects include Wander & Pursuit a solo exhibition at House of Gaga in Los Angeles, USA; Who Tells a Tale Adds A Tail, a group exhibition at Denver Art Museum; Denver, USA; Vain Kisses to the Source, a solo exhibition at Deli Gallery in New York, USA; Vermin Gloom a two person exhibition at Project Pangeé, Montreal, USA; a participation in "OTRXS MUNDXS" a group exhibition at Museo Tamayo, CDMX, MX; "Anima Mundi" a group exhibition presented as part of Manifiesta 13, Marseille, FR; "Janus" a solo exhibition at Embajada, San Juan, PR; "Half Blood Princess" a solo exhibition at PEANA, Monterrey, MX; "Blossoming Carcass" at Make Room, Los Angeles, USA.

LIVES AND WORKS

CDMX, MX

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022 Wander & Pursuit, House of Gaga; Los Angeles, USA
2022 Vain Kisses to the Source, Deli Gallery; New York, USA
2021 Vermin Gloom, Project Pangeé; Montréal, CA
2021 Las cosas suceden de forma silenciosa, PEANA & Labor, CDMX, MX
2021 Gutz: ASMA + Sophronia Cook, Et.Al. Gallery; San Francisco, USA
2021 Projeet Pangee; Montreal, CA
2021 80m2LiviaBenavides; Lima, PE
2020 Janus, Embajada galería; San Juan, PR
2019 Half Blood Princess, PEANA; Monterrey, MX.
2019 Blossoming Carcass, Make Room Gallery; Los Angeles, USA
2019 La Mariposa en el Lodo, Zona MACO, Proyecto NASA(L); CDMX, MX
2018 Fantasma, CHACO Art Fair, Proyecto NASA(L); Santiago, CL
2018 Visitante, Arte Passagem; São Paulo, BR

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 Portrait of an Artist, PEANA; CDMX, MX
2022 Who Tells a Tale Adds a Tail: Latin America and Contemporary Art, Denver Museum; Denver, USA
2022 Por debajo del árbol, Studio of Architect Agustín Hernández, PEANA Off-site; CDMX, MX
2021 End of a Dream, No Place Gallery; Ohio, USA
2021 Trama, 80m2 Livia Benavides; Lima, PE
2020 OTRXS MUNDXS, Museo Tamayo, CDMX, MX
2020 We introduce ourselves to planets and flowers, Kylin Gallery; Los Angeles, USA
2020 You sit in a Garden, Centre Clark; Montreal, CA
2020 Anima Mundi, St Victor Abbey, Manifiesta Biennial; Marseille, FR
2020 La memoria que no recordamos, PEANA & Labor; Monterrey, MX

2020 Blasted Heath, A.M. 180 Gallery; Prague, CZ
2020 ARCO Art Fair, Embajada; Madrid, SP
2020 Zona MACO, Proyecto NASA(L); CDMX, MX
2020 Material Art Fair, PEANA; CDMX, MX
2020 Baitball 01, Like a little disaster / Pane Projects; Polignano a Mare, IT
2019 Futuro Modular, Rachel Uffner Gallery; New York, USA
2019 Sanctuary, Jessica Silverman Gallery- Fused Space; San Francisco, USA
2019 Second Life, Casa Mobius hosted by PEANA, Condo MX; CDMX, MX
2019 Cold Prey, Lubov Gallery; New York, USA
2019 XYXX010101000, Galería Curro; Guadalajara, MX
2019 Pach Pan, Diablo Rosso; Panamá, PA
2019 Sinergia, Espacio Cultural Plaza de la Fuente; Guayaquil, EC
2019 ArteBA, Proyecto NASA(L); Buenos Aires, AR
2019 Art Lima Gallery Weekend, Proyecto NASA(L); Lima, PE
2019 The Blossom, Material Art Fair, Sketch Bogotá; CDMX, MX



Selected Projects

Wander & Pursuit

House of Gaga; Los Angeles, USA, 2022

Vain Kisses to the Source

Deli Gallery; New York, USA, 2022

Vermin Gloom

Projet Pangee; Montreal, CA, 2021

Who Tells a Tale adds a Tail

Denver Museum; Denver, USA, 2020

Things Happen In A Silent Way

PEANA x Labor; CDMX, MX, 2021

OTRXS MUNDXS

Museo Tamayo, CDMX, MX, 2020

Anima Mundi

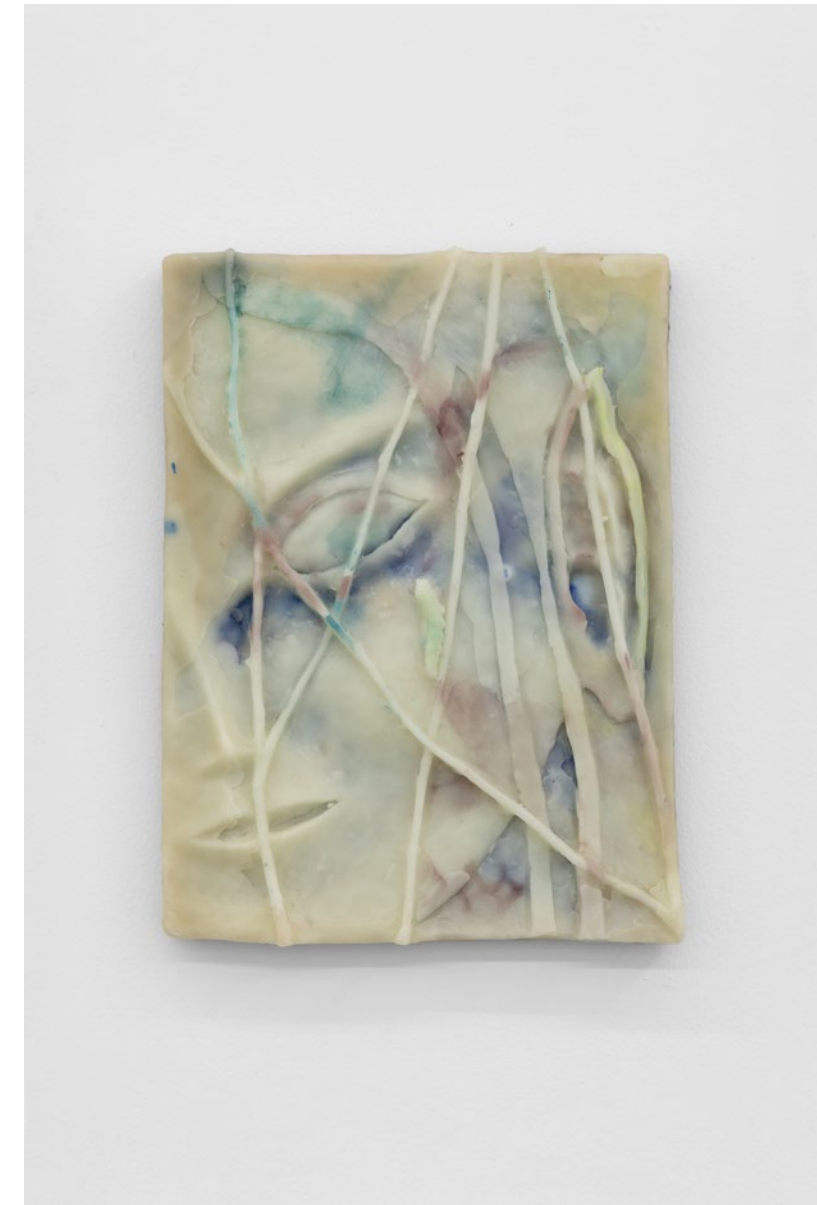
St Victor Abbey, Manifesta Biennial; Marseille, FR, 2020

JANUS

Embajada Galería, San Juan, PR, 2020

Half Blood Princess

PEANA, Monterrey, MX, 2019



Wander & Pursuit

House of GAGA; Los Angeles, USA. 2022

“The deer that leads a knight through the forest into the enchanted castle is in reality the princess who lives within” - PH

Wander & Pursuit presents an anachronistic office environment rendered in bleak color palettes and composed as a symmetric, medieval walled garden adorned with figurative renderings of chivalric symbolism depicting idyllic moments of the hunt and romantic courtship. The show delves on the contemporary construction of a sense of purpose articulated through labor and the way identity is intertwined with ideas of yearning, fantasy, and desire which translate into metaphorical quests for a more meaningful existence.

These chivalric tales of fulfillment and destiny prevail as aspirational narratives of desire and realization reaffirm ideas of success achievable exclusively through the accumulation of multiple forms of capital. How do these narratives dictating contemporary life embody a clash between contradicting desires and fantasies? Does only the alienated nature seek adventure? These allegorical figures of grandness infiltrate our workplaces. which today have expanded beyond their place and into a quotidian setting, leaving the office to become a mere symbol itself, a ruin from a time in our past when life was divided into work and leisure.



ProDisplay P202



Left: Self without work, 2022
Epoxy resin, aluminum, blind headrail
206 x 144 x 5 cm

Right: .RAR (Wallpaper), 2022
Monitor, monitor arm mount, modular office table, silicone
48 x 29 x 4 cm



Vain Kisses to the Source

Deli Gallery; New York, USA, 2022

“And now they were preparing the funeral pile, the brandished torches and the bier; but his body was nowhere to be found. In place of his body they find a flower, its yellow centre girt with white petals.”

- Ovid, The Metamorphoses

An end is perhaps a way of beginning, or rather connecting a space between what once was and what could be. What if the process of transformation was not a finite act, but a state of becoming? A space where one could hold within themselves the multiplicity of both the before and the after, not simply a state of transition, but rather a saturation of the self in all its variable forms?

The title of this exhibition, Vain Kisses to the Source , is drawn from the classical myth of Narcissus, which tells the story of a youth who, having grown enamored with his own image, dies for being unable to possess the object of his affection. The reflective pool, within which Narcissus perceives himself, appears in the text's Spanish translation as fuente –meaning at once: fountain, font, or source . As translation too, may be taken as a form of metamorphosis, this more capacious definition allows this encounter to be both an act of self-reflection and a connection to some larger entity. Through this reading, knowing oneself becomes an essential act of belonging, of place-making between worlds.

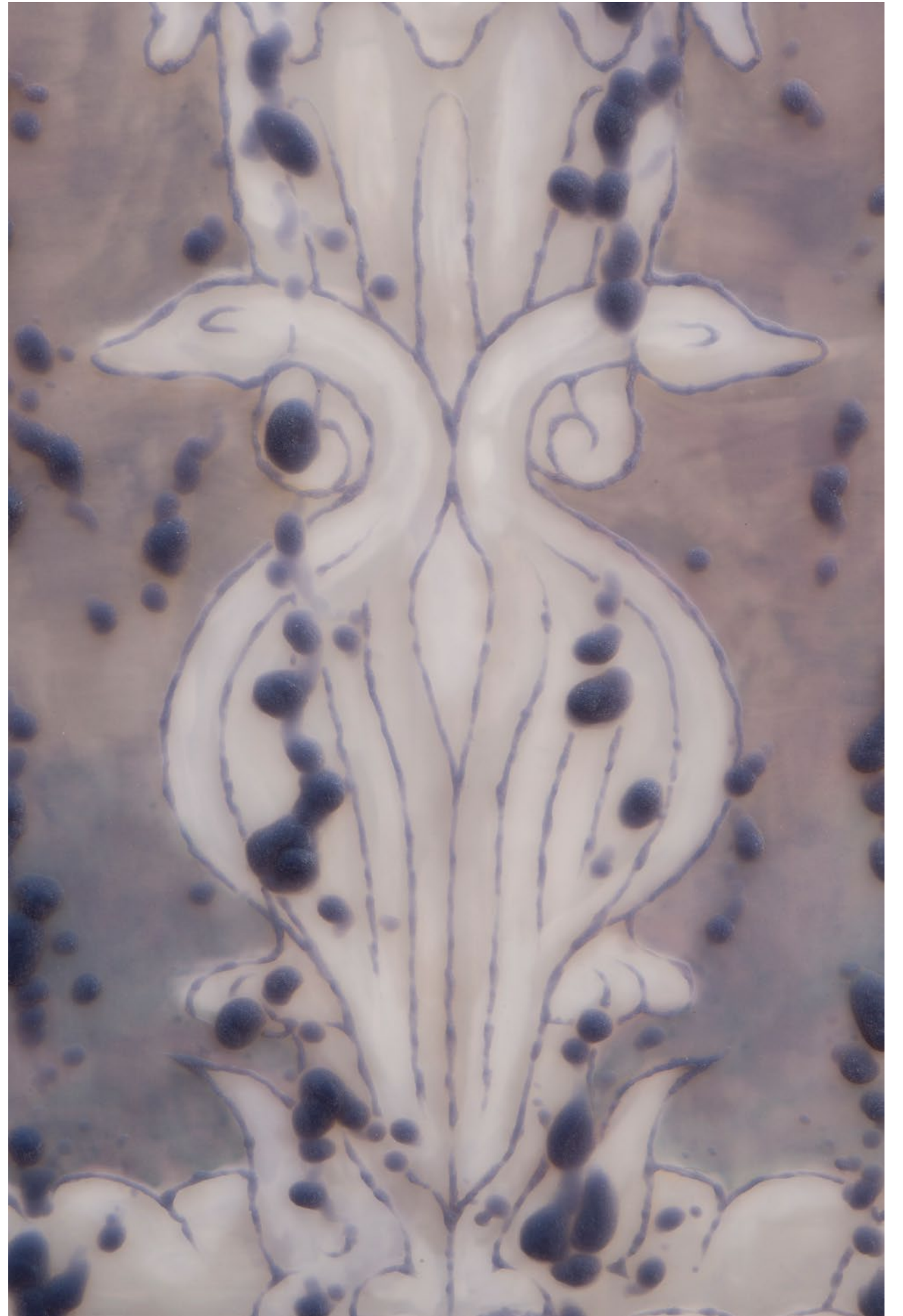
Attending to this space of in-betweenness , the works in this exhibition open the possibility of existing between dualities or states of difference, through both conceptual and material means. Paintings emerge through careful layers of soft silicone, hinting at the suppleness of flesh through the veil of a synthetic skin, bruised or blushing with an internal glow. Sculptures of cast bronze filigree trace torsos and ripening fruit, at once fragile and rigid, hybrids between nature and device. The fragmented body decays, reforms, takes old and new articulations—breathes life into itself.

In this space, one can take in the complexity of contradiction and imagine an expanded futurity beyond hegemonic worldviews and boundaries. A world in which the nymph and the cyborg conjoin, entangle their locks and their wires in grief or rapture, fluid between the ancient and the modern.

Perhaps an end is a way of beginning, or rather connecting what once was and what could be. Where past and present selves brush lips and embrace, and new forms grow forth.

- RK







Vermin Gloom

Projet Pangee; Montreal, CA, 2021

Something becomes a vermin only in relation to any human activity or environment. When nature proliferates unexpectedly, it reveals an autonomy that overcomes our human desire for control. How can something feel out of their habitat even within their own home? A vermin can be multiple kinds of species, depending on the context of its inconvenience to human habitation.

Mold growing on the ceiling, critters making pathways within the walls, ants nest by the window, many roommates at the haunt. Can these uninvited visitors become closer to our desired image of nature? Like the memory of a walk into the trails of a landscape? Why is this natural idealized spectre often distant to our mundane experience of unpleasant otherness?

The exhibition presents a series of sculptural wall works along with small floor sculptures that set an imaginary stage within a young human's room in the midst of its abandonment. An array of insect figurations occupies the space, as encounters with an omen. A streaming sound comes out of a sweat-stained pillow on the floor: a speechless voice attempting some sort of communication, composed from fragments of our world ingested into a new gentle groan.

"Gregor had a shock as he heard his own voice answering hers, unmistakably his own voice, it was true, but with a persistent horrible twittering mixed squeak behind it like an undertone, which left the words in their clear shape only for the first moment and then rose up reverberating around them to destroy their sense, so that one could not be sure one had heard them rightly."

- Franz Kafka

Text: Courtesy of the artists







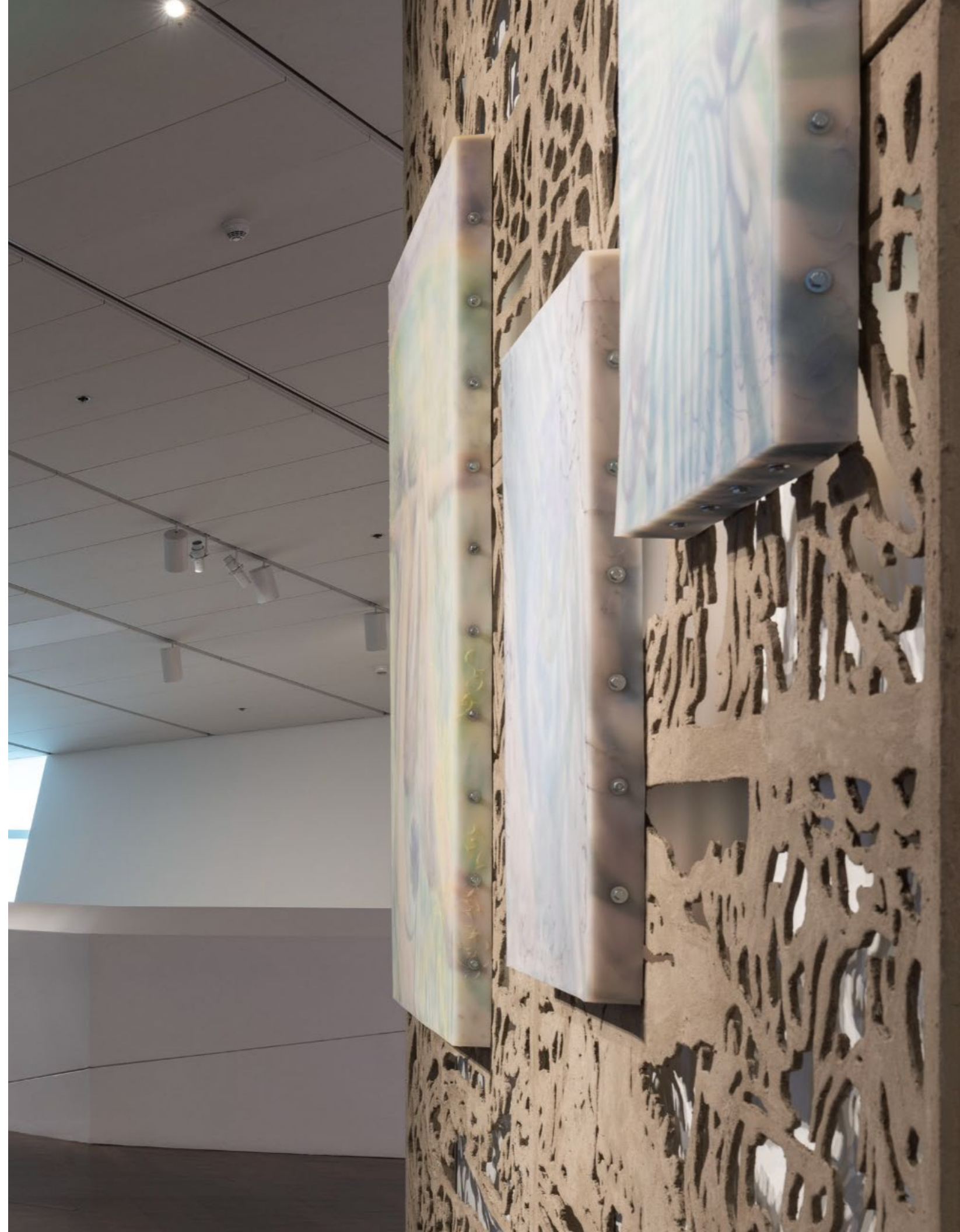
Who Tells a Tale Adds a Tail: Latin America and Contemporary Art

Denver Museum; Denver, USA, 2022

ASMA is the artist duo formed by Hanya Belia and Matias Armendaris, whose practice consistently gives form to objects that conjure fantastical parallel worlds. Their chosen media, one could say, is precisely that worlding. They bring forth these alternative, more luscious, phantasmagorical, otherworldly universes through their exalted material curiosity. In their wood-floored, light-flooded, Lagunilla-loud studio in Mexico City, they stir their own cauldrons of platinum silicon – a material usually reserved for the food and medical industries – manipulating for better impregnation of pigments, for translucidity and precise sensual light-play and for a more pliable inclination to detail. They love a challenge too and have taught themselves to carve different types of wood, to weave their own felt, to weld brass and silver, as well as to delicately sculpt with paraffin wax. These materials usually combine in layers of complexity, adding up to an aura of enigmatic preciousness to their pieces: silicone and metal wink at kinky inclinations, silver metal hugging a flower turns her into a Joan of Arc cosplayer. The result is a collection of objects that in both their material and narrative properties appear as talismans transported into our reality from other possible trajectories of existence. They're wispy, ethereal, pulled out of the depth of re-examined myths and the twistiest of fairy tales – dug up from an alternate future, a weird past laying ahead of us.

In ASMA's otherworlds they ponder if Narcissus, the gorgeous hunter's story classically portrayed by Ovid, wasn't so much in love with himself or selfinvolved to the point of self-annihilation, but instead perhaps obsessed with his connection to the material world around him enough to witness himself dissolving into the beauty of nature's features. In another body of work the turbulent inner-life of adolescence is embodied by an anthropomorphic rose. In a series of silicone sculptures the flower performs the yearning, the clichéd pseudo-romance and the diluted borders between the real and the purely psychological that throw experience into chaos during those early years of existence. A recent show in Montreal had ASMA re-visiting Kafka's Metamorphosis, pulling inspiration specifically from the passages in the story in which he describes music and sounds. The resulting works were a meditation on the forceful transformative power of isolation, of spending all our time inside, of sitting with one's thoughts for too long, and how that transforms one's conscience but also one's perception of that which sits outside of us and of our domesticated spaces. Like the art that was possible before our current systems were in place—before we tamed it into a global market— the one that waged the duty of amalgamating function, beauty and metaphysics, ASMA's objects too want to embody this kind of vortex, where a devotion for myth, narrative and allegory meet with the ritualistic, meditative, mind-altering aspects of conversing with material. Their objects are another twist in the branch of that tradition, that lacing of ornament, function and cosmogony. Their practice is cosmoplastic: the work of ASMA is to hint at the worlds that could be, that could have been.

-Gaby Cepeda



Things Happen In A Silent Way

Labor; CDMX, MX, 2021

Labor and PEANA are pleased to present their second collaboration, this time as part of the activities for Zona Maco 2021, Art Week in Mexico City.

Things Happen In A Silent Way is an exhibition that brings together the work of Jorge Satorre (1979, Mexico) and the duo ASMA, formed by Matías Armendaris (1990, Ecuador) and Hanya Belιά (1994, Mexico), with the purpose of exploring not only their points of contact, but also of contrast.

Muscular flowers, mice who are dealers, disembodied hands, and laughing eagles inhabit the exhibition space, evoking a multiplicity of open narratives. Working with drawing, installation and sculpture, each of these artists generates tension between the portrayal of reality and fiction, truth and myth; the projection of desire and the adoption of foreign bodies, meanwhile appealing to a recognition of otherness in the process.

Jorge Satorre presents multiple bodies of work which reaffirm his interest in an oeuvre that develops as a series of responses to excluded traces of historical moments within the diverse contexts he engages with. In Formal encounters in the garden the artist reviewed Miguel Covarrubias' illustrations -found in Casa Barragán's archives- extracting details from them, turning them into a series of clay objects designed to decorate the Barragán house. As opposed to how it was originally installed, the complete series is now presented as a group, in correspondance to the exhibition format adopted for his installation of Los negros, currently at Museo Jumex. Another example of the use of collective memory in Satorre's work can be seen in Águila ríe where the Hokioi, an extinct species of giant eagle that once existed in New Zealand -and with which the artist has been working intermittently since 2013- reappears. Furthermore -while still using his immediate context as a starting point- Satorre also includes the subject of stories which are close to his personal background within his work; as in the case of A veces uso imágenes en mi trabajo que pueden ser vergonzosas

para mí, mi familia y mis galeristas (Sometimes I use images in my work that may be embarrassing for me, my family and my gallery owners). This body of work, consisting of two graphite drawings and a sculpture of intervened magazines -which were obtained from a personal archive from his teenage years, and from which he imagines a series of peculiar scenes inhabited by mice- responds to the context in which it was originally presented: the former garage of artist David Ireland in San Francisco.

In contrast, ASMA's work resorts to mythology, psychological literature, popular culture and alternative futures from which, employing their contrasting formal language, they conceive a series of hybrid characters in scenarios and situations endowed with strong symbolism. On this occasion, the duo presents a new body of work that extends their material exploration. Composed by a series of silicon paintings in bas relief that revolve around the image of an anthropomorphic rose, the works portray this character inhabiting renditions of the romantic cliché of which this particular flower is typically a partaker. Through the construction of this fantasy-induced realm, a psychological space is materialized, where bodies of vegetal-insectoid forms represent human intimacies from the sexual-affective imagination of adolescence, all while the animist language of the relief proposes an internal world framed by objects that evoke a real, domestic, industrial and utilitarian space.

Although the conceptual strategies involved in the construction of the projects presented by each of these artists have characteristics that distinguish them from one another; on one hand, the historical review of the local context with which Jorge Satorre works, and on the other, ASMA's reproduction of a quasi-mythological and fantastic imagery, this exhibition seeks to reveal the private place in which their practices find a converging point. The openness of the narratives to which the artists in the exhibition resort to gives place to the contact and cross-fertilization of the works, while their unique formal and conceptual strategies allow us to clearly identify each of their distinctive voices.







OTRXS MUNDXS

Museo Tamayo, CDMX, MX, Nov 2020

OTRXS MUNDXS [Spanish gender neutral for “Other Worlds”] is a group exhibition that surveys and articulates the work of an heterogeneous, multicultural group of more than forty artists who work individually and collectively in Mexico City. Throughout four thematic sections (I. Capitalism and Domination, II. Seriality, Identity and Obliteration, III. Entropy, Speculation and Visualization, and IV. Body and Materiality), the exhibition presents recent works and special commissions, which reveal urgent discourses, representative of an artistic community who internalizes the paradigms and failures of late capitalism. OTRXS MUNDXS focuses on highlighting otherness: artist’s presentations constitute artistic microcosms which question the preconceived, hegemonic notions—or else, they solidify alternative visions—of what it means to make art in or from Mexico City.

OTRXS MUNDXS presents a majority of younger, or emerging artists—for some of whom this exhibition is their first major museum presentation—as it articulates the narratives in which they are invested with a selected group of more established artists who have been instrumental for defining the Mexican artistic landscape, both nationally and internationally. Even though the exhibition is an exhaustive revision of the current artistic landscape, it is not intended to be an all-encompassing or universal exercise. In that sense, the exhibition has been constructed with an awareness of its own limitations and with the hope of posing one argument, amongst the many that can be made about art in the

present. The exhibition is, first and foremost, a platform for art and artists to trace conversations that have been at the forefront of global artistic discourse, presenting the important dialogue between local communities and Mexican artists with artists from Ecuador, República Dominicana, France, Brazil, Peru, and many cities of the United States. It also addresses the lack of institutional representation and attention to local communities, particularly for a younger generation of artists in the city. OTRXS MUNDXS consists of an unprecedented institutional response to the global pandemic; a gesture which, in the best of cases, anticipates a post-pandemic alterity, a world in which equality, social and interspecies justice and the well-being of the inhabitants of this complex city, is not posed as radical idea, but as an attainable reality.

ARTISTS:

Francis Alÿs, **ASMA**, Zazil Barba, Fernanda Barreto, Javier Barrios, Miguel Calderón, Pia Camil, Marcos Castro, Paloma Contreras Lomas, Chelsea Culprit, Pablo Dávila, ektor garcia, Mario García Torres y Sol Oosel, Yann Gerstberger, Julieta Gil, Daniel Godínez Nivón, Romeo Gómez López, Cristóbal Gracia, Clotilde Jiménez Madeline Jiménez, Ángela Leyva, Yeni Mao, Noe Martínez, Melanie McLain, Josué Mejía, Berenice Olmedo, Fernando Palma Rodríguez, Tania Pérez Córdova, Rita Ponce de León, Jerónimo Reyes-Retana, Armando Rosales, Marco Rountree, SANGREE, Bárbara Sánchez-Kane, Guillermo Santamarina, Ana Segovia, Tercerunquinto and Tezontle.

Poción Multijugos, 2020

Iron chain, stainless steel, white micro-paraffin, resin

A white wax flower growing upwards, drinking a purple fluid as a theatrical moment of frozen time. The materiality of the flower is visceral and resembles a body. Its frailty and capacity to change form or melt gives the character a liveliness and delicacy.

The title of the piece references the magical potion in the Harry Potter universe (polyjuice potion) which allows a human to transform into someone else. In ASMA's reinterpretation, the white flower could be in the middle of a transmutation. Its appearance of the flower accentuates a monstrous quality and a creature sensation, looking both menacing and delicate at the same time.

The recurrent natural motifs in their work come from their interest in a polluted version of nature, scaping the traditional conception of purity that is commonly associated with it. Taking that into consideration, the artificial materiality of the flower contrasts its natural and organic shapes and appearance.







Stranger observing mammals, 2020

Brass, silver, crystal, water, flower

A brass casted and silver coated flower vase in the shape of an insect standing on the wall with its wings open reflecting other beings in a low relief composition. At the tip of its pointy tail, a glass flask can hold a flower making it functional. The object resembles an ancient artifact yet contains an image of a contemporary encounter. The metallic quality of the piece also reflects the viewer inside the image of the encounter tinting the image with color. The domestic quality of the vase activates a human-object relationship that allows the sculpture to transform subtly. As a living creature, the sculpture acts as a witness to its environment and its inhabitants.





Anima Mundi

St Victor Abbey, Manifesta 13 Biennial; Marseille, FR, 2020

The exhibition Anima Mundi gathers several international artists in the ancient crypts of the Abbey of Saint-Victor, one of the oldest monuments in the Provence region. The works on display, mainly sculptures, communicate with the paleochristian sarcophagi in the crypts and propose a reflection on death, spirituality and the relation to History. The works, mixing art and craft, resonate and connect to the place through their vernacular and spiritual anchoring. The artists invited by Emmanuelle Luciani and Southway Studio combine past and present to offer artistic and aesthetic alternatives to contemporary matters with inspiration from the heritage impulse that arose from the Revolution, or like the Nabis and Pre-Raphaelites who reclaim the past to propose new artistic forms where spirituality is brought together with arts and modernity.





JANUS

Embajada Galería, San Juan, PR, 2020

The exhibition presents a sculptural installation along with a series of paintings and high-reliefs that construct a psycho-fantastic world where architectural elements are transformed into something living and organic. The construction of this internal space seeks to expand the traditional binary notion of the mythological symbol of Janus by extending its possibilities of containing diametrically opposed states. The exhibition makes use of contrasting materials that integrate an organic and corporeal viscosity juxtaposed against metallic and reflective rigidity with clinical and futuristic qualities; a semi-apocalyptic environment that is simultaneously alive and fertile.

In classical mythology, there are several figures that either fuse or contrast two opposing elements. One such figure is from the Roman tradition –the image of the deity Janus, commonly represented by a bust with two faces positioned in opposite directions. This image metaphorically contains many meanings, such as those echoing a process of transition and renewal, thus providing the etymological origin for the month of January, to mark the beginning of the year, and the exit from the previous one. The image has also been employed on doors, functioning as a transitional point between one place and another, an entrance and an exit simultaneously.

'Janus' traditional function –in addition to personifying union– is actually to demarcate a transition, the transition from one state to another, which also reaffirms the separation of states of difference. The image works primarily to define a division between two opposites. In the exhibition, this transitory portal symbolized by Janus expands and becomes a third habitable space, a space/state which, in itself, does not require the viewer to move toward a pure definition, but is internally contaminated by everything that integrates it. Janus, then, as a living space is also

an absent place of purity that mixes the natural with the mechanical, the past with the future, the imaginary with the real, good and evil, the living with the inert, the human with the animal, the soft and the rigid.

Janus, like a mirror, connects two adjacent worlds. The mirror as a metaphor in space activates this connection between two parallel places, expanding architecture and altering the way objects are perceived. This thin and transparent membrane becomes the central locus, which weaves everything around it. The mirror also mimics that quality, becoming a space in itself.

“Its form doesn't matter: no form manages to circumscribe and alter it. Mirror is light. A tiny piece of mirror is always the whole mirror. Remove its frame or the lines of its edges, and it grows like spilling water.”

– Clarice Lispector









Fierce look, 2020
MDF, Forton MG, hydrostone, fiberglass, dry pastels, silver-plated
metal castings
40 x 50 cm



Agua dura, 2020
MDF, Forton MG, hydrostone, fiberglass, dry pastels, silver-plated
metal castings
40 x 50 cm

Half Blood Princess

PEANA, Monterrey, MX, 2019

The exhibition echoes a mythological open narrative of an encounter at the shore of a lagoon. Some fragments of this narrative suggest a hybrid being, a recognition of otherness and an embrace of different bodies: two facing characters that become everything and change over and over into the landscape. This speculative fiction takes place in a possible ancient past or a far away future where technologies have become organic.

Half Blood Princess features a series of sculptures, paintings, and installation elements that sets the stage at a place in between exterior and interior. Through the use of two large lattice that dictate the flow of entry to the show and the pace of the story, the context of the experience becomes about looking and being seen. The exhibition is comprised mainly of works that live between painting and sculpture, putting in evidence its formal propensity for fading limits and merging opposites. This new body of work constitutes a closer approach to figuration in direct contrast with mechanical line abstractions.

As part of their collaborative practice which enables the coexistence of differences and the process of interrelation, the works go through a series of material processes of alteration and modification that resist the casting processes and puts into play interrelations of materials. As a metaphorical figurative element, the liquid in the lagoon repeats through the exhibition suggesting a moment of submersion, and a possible process of becoming.



Half Blood Princess, 2019
White paraffin wax, encaustic paint
53 x 40 x 5 cm







'Celosía' En un jardín salvaje, hay gente entera, 2019
MDF, wood, cement, polymer resins, water-repellent material and fibreglass
183 x 207 x 10 cm



I'm a beast of shapeless form, 2019
White paraffin wax, encaustic paint, MDF
37 x 27 x 4 cm

PEANA

Via Clodia 169, SPGG, 66220, Mexico | peanaprojects.com | +52 (81) 2315 0150