

Approaching Abstraction

Curated by Alberto Ríos and Bosco Sodi

30 January — 23 March 2018

Blain|Southern London

Blain|Southern is pleased to present *Approaching Abstraction*, a group exhibition curated by Alberto Ríos and Bosco Sodi.

Presenting work by nine Mexican artists working across a variety of different mediums, the exhibition is divided into four themes: time, architecture and landscape, historical commentary and socio-political critique.



Benjamín Torres, *Imported 1*, 2018 © Benjamín Torres
Courtesy the artist and Blain|Southern

Performance artist Galia Eibenschutz's pastel drawings are a combination of dance and draftsmanship. Documenting the sequence of movements of her body makes within space and across the passage of time, her 'instants' - on view here as a triptych - were all completed as part of the same performance. Time can be seen and heard in the work of Tania Candiani. *Sobra el tiempo* (2008), an installation of 240 ticking alarm clocks is an early example of her research into time as a construct.

Benjamín Torres' *Imported* series of collages are a comment on the social implications of the neoliberal economic policies in Mexico. The works in the exhibition depict two Heineken adverts almost obliterated by paint, a reference to the sale of the Mexican beer company Corona to the Dutch brewing conglomerate Heineken International.

The collage *Hombre Murciélago (Bat-man)* by Francisco Muñoz highlights the tense relationship that exists between the pre-Columbian beauty ideals extolled in historic paintings and murals, and their counterparts in today's foreign mass media. Muñoz's work is a reflection of the wider interest in critiquing archaeology and official history that underpins the ideological construction of national identity in Mexico.

The way history has been written, appropriated and constructed in the country is also the basis for the sculptural practices of Tomás Díaz Cedeño and Cristóbal Gracia. *Camina* by Tomás Díaz Cedeño makes a direct reference to a vocabulary rooted in daily Mexican life, replicating marginalised systems of belief and the ritualistic processes around them. *Erizo Acapulqueño* draws on the nostalgia for Mexico's modernist era centred around visions of Acapulco in its heyday from the 1950's to the 1970's. He questions the post-colonialist Hollywood vision of an exoticism that served as a counterpoint to the ideals of modernity at the time.

Participating artists: Tania Candiani, Tomás Díaz Cedeño, Galia Eibenschutz, Cristóbal Gracia, Isauro Huizar, Daniela Libertad, Fabiola Menchelli, Francisco Muñoz and Benjamín Torres.

Approaching Abstraction runs concurrently to artist Bosco Sodi's exhibition *Heavens and the Earth*. Sodi is the founder of Fundación Casa Wabi, a foundation that supports the development of new opportunities for contemporary art in Mexico. Alongside Casa Wabi's former chief curator, Alberto Ríos, Sodi has co-curated *Approaching Abstraction* and many of the artists in the exhibition have undertaken residencies at Casa Wabi.

List of works

Staircase



- 1 Francisco Muñoz
Hombre Murciélago (Bat-man)
2018
Collage of fashion plot paper,
laser print and graphite on wood
150 x 150 cm
Ref: 62515



- 7 Benjamín Torres
Imported 1
2018
Digital print, collage and
acrylic paint on canvas
156.5 x 118 cm
Ref: 62516

Downstairs



- 2 Galia Eibenschutz
Instante 1 (Instant 1)
2017
White pastel on blackboard
canvas
120 x 80 cm
Ref: 62505



- 8 Cristobal Gracia
*Erizo Acapulqueño (Acapulco's
Sea Urchin)*
2017
Coconuts, cut iron
75 x 210 x 130 cm
Ref: 62514



- 3 Galia Eibenschutz
Instante 2 (Instant 2)
2017
White pastel on blackboard
canvas
120 x 80 cm
Ref: 62507



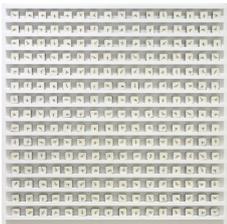
- 9 Tomás Díaz Cedeño
Camina (Walk)
2018
Pig leather, pigment, hemp,
fabric, snake skin and plaster
155 x 70 x 60 cm
Ref: 62513



- 4 Galia Eibenschutz
Instante 3 (Instant 3)
2017
White pastel on blackboard
canvas
120 x 80 cm
Ref: 62508



- 10 Isauro Huizar
Quiscalus
2018
Acrylic and inkjet print on
canvas
190 x 140 cm
Ref: 62512



- 5 Tania Candiani
Sobra el tiempo (On time)
2008-2015
240 alarm clocks, batteries,
wooden shelves
148 x 150 x 4.5 cm
Edition 2018
Ref: 62509



- 11 Fabiola Menchelli
Untitled
2017
Cyanotype on Arches Hot
Press cotton paper
86.5 x 67 cm
Edition of 3 + 2 AP
Ref: 62511



- 6 Benjamín Torres
Imported 1
2018
Digital print on canvas, collage
and acrylic paint on canvas
156.5 x 118 cm
Ref: 62517



- 12 Daniela Libertad
Paisaje 21 (Landscape 21)
2018
Coloured pencil on paper
133 x 81.5 cm
Ref: 62510