

ENGLISH

GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS DUBAI

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ARENA ENTRE LAS MANOS

DANIEL BUREN / IVÁN CAPOTE / LORIS CECCHINI / ELISABET CERVIÑO /
SHILPA GUPTA / LUIS LÓPEZ-CHÁVEZ / CARLOS MARTIEL / JOSÉ MESÍAS /
HANS OP DE BEECK / NARI WARD / JOSÉ YAQUE

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Galleria Continua is pleased to present the collective exhibition "Arena entre las manos" ("Sand Between Hands"), by artists Daniel Buren, Iván Capote, Loris Cecchini, Elisabet Cerviño, Shilpa Gupta, Luis López-Chávez, Carlos Martiel, José Mesías, Hans Op De Beeck, Nari Ward y José Yaque. The exhibition curated by Niurma Pérez explores the tension between stable and unstable forms, the notion of the transitory and the impermanence of things.

The instant when we plunge our hands into the sand and grab a handful can be truly ephemeral. It flows almost like a liquid, leaking away, disappearing. The works that make up the exhibition explore, in different ways, this sensation of the mutable, the fleeting or momentary.

The exhibition opens with a video that immerses us in the sensorial world of Belgian artist Hans Op de Beeck. *Parade* takes place on the stage of a theatre, through which an incessant procession of characters parades like a stream of passers-by on a street, accompanied by scenography that changes according to the cadence of the seasons. The landscape resonates like the contemplative poetry of an art piece and offers a visual reflection on life and death.

In the central room of the gallery, a gigantic square of white and yellow lines slides from the wall to the floor. It cannot contain itself within the limits of the wall; but, even as it slips away, it preserves its form. Daniel Buren insists on finding the perfect verticality of the stripes after the rotation of the square, which accentuates the complexity of the work and the artist's ability to create new experiential forms.

The center of the gallery is taken up by *Contra los poetas* (*Against Poets*), a large installation by Luis López-Chávez made from leftover pieces of wood whose surfaces have been care-

fully polished and painted white. This landscape of unfinished forms incites the spectator to develop each fragment, to add to it, to reconstruct it, to decorate it, to create, using what is apparently imperfect.

On the other hand, fragmented engine components are scattered over the surfaces of the skies in Shilpa Gupta's work. The artist alludes to the trafficking of engines that takes place on the Bangladesh-India border, referring to the culture of repair, camouflage and adaptation that prevails in this border region.

In *Dislexia* (*Dyslexia*), by Cuban artist Iván Capote, we can read: "Life is a text that we learn to read too late," as the arm of the machine slides over the motor oil. Beyond discovering the intricacies of language, the work of this artist focuses on a conceptual creation based on a linguistic tradition that proposes to reflect on ontological and existential phenomena.

Other artists whose approach to the theme of this exhibition stands out mainly in the visual domain are José Yaque, Elisabet Cerviño and Loris Cecchini. José Yaque exhibits a large canvas from the series of minerals that explores painting as an object, while Elisabet Cerviño presents a set of rusted copper sheets from the series *A cielo abierto* (*Opencast*), in which a mysterious natural landscape engages in dialogue with industrialization. Italian artist Loris Cecchini's *Aeolian Landforms*, for their part, resemble natural phenomena such as desert landscapes. The vibrant, monochromatic surface exemplifies the erosive effect of water and air, as well as the consequent natural phenomena that manifest themselves through the undulating "waves" that make up the sand dunes always subject to the amorphous whims of the wind. As if influencing the movement of this surface, *El nivel de la decepción* (*Disappointment Level*) by

José Mesías is located close to Cecchini's piece. It is an installation where a scale experiences a slight constant movement from the air of a fan at a distance. The beauty of the object and its common utility, together with the lightness of its movement, construct an image that is as poetic as it is disquieting.

On the upper floor of the gallery, American artist of Jamaican origin Nari Ward and Cuban artist Carlos Martiel explore the theme of the exhibition as it relates to other issues of a political, social, racial, geographical and cultural nature. Two of Carlos Martiel's photographs are on display: *Tierra de nadie (Nobody's Land)* and *South Body*. In both cases, the artist self-flagellates, hurting his body by having the American flag pierced through his skin, in order to draw attention to racial issues. While in one of the images Martiel's pose is that

of lying on the ground, in the other he stands up and stares straight ahead with an attitude of resistance.

In dialogue with Martiel's works, stands *Crying Form, Rising Symbol*, a star made of shoelaces. Nari Ward's work interweaves issues of citizenship, cultural consumption, discrimination and poverty with her own life experiences, first in Jamaica and later in Harlem. The contrast between the formal composition of the work and the meaning of the symbol it represents is evident from the title. The ascension suggested by the symbol of the star contrasts with the gravitational force evidenced by the cords; similarly, the elevation of faith clashes with the sadness conveyed by the cords, hopelessly dripping to the ground. Through unexpected compositions, Ward proposes the transformation of everyday objects into compelling visual markers with narrative implications, subverting their primary purpose.

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