

MUME

## New Popular Baroque

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In each epoch of modernity, multiple forms of inhabiting the contradictions of capitalism have coexisted. One of them, following the Mexican philosopher Bolívar Echeverría, is the baroque ethos. Baroqueism for this author is not reduced to describe a style and ornamental qualities, extravagant and ritualistic in cultural forms. It is a "model of trans-historic behavior", a "way of living" that knots, disfigures, deviates, inverts, twists and reinvents the normative codes of language and planned economy. The "Ethos Baroque" of Latin America and the Caribbean does not refer to a past that has been mummified and turned into heritage. On the contrary, it is a living daily life that is constantly being renewed and rewritten as a survival strategy. Recently, the debate on the baroque that had proliferated in literature and philosophy has permeated the understanding of certain economies in a neoliberal context. A theoretical proposal in that direction is the notion of "baroque economies" by Verónica Gago (2015). With it, the author described an entire sphere of popular economies that "use neoliberalism tactically while putting it in crisis in an intermittent but recursive manner. These are traveling, informal, pirate economies, Made in China, Taiwan or Tepito (in the case of Mexico City) governed by a pragmatic vitalism that builds a

"neoliberalism from below" which appropriates, alters and relaunches macroeconomic accounts.

This exhibition brings together images, objects and documents where this "popular baroque" resonates in various ways through the use of some materials and tactics of informal economies. The ensemble makes one think not only of how these artists use objects extracted from those environments, but it also reveals similar ways in which the art market works: through the smuggling that creates its own networks that border institutional circuits, inventing micro-economics through emerging strategies of production, distribution and consumption.

Canalla is a space managed by artists located in Ciudad Neza first in a taco stand and recently in a *mototaxi* (motorcycle-taxi). The project combines exhibitions and sales of art and *chácharas* (cheap items) with free public programs for the surrounding community. This exhibition includes works by Sonia Madrigal, Pamela Seferino, Tonatiú Cabello and Gabriela Sandoval along with the record of interventions made at the stand in recent years. RRD is a similar type of space because of its anomaly of infrastructure and forms of work. It is an independent collaborative project managed by artists (Paloma Gómez, Joel Castro, Sergio Torres, Alberto Vivar, Lorena Álvarez and Bruno Ruiz). It is located in a newsstand in the San Miguel Chapultepec neighborhood and commonly offers exhibitions of small format

works and independent publications. On this occasion they show the registration and editorial product of their latest work, RedEx, a "pirate" messaging system for home exhibitions in a miniature booth. Emilya Rendón made independent miniature art spaces where you can make and recombine your own portable exhibitions. Diana Cantarey presents the 3 pesos Triennial, a recent event where the cost of producing the pieces, the prizes and the printing of the catalog were equivalent to 3 pesos respectively. Zyanya Arellano made a series of makeup designs inspired by the *caritas* street stands of Mexico City, which offer face painting with eccentric colorful patterns for children. Adrian Araiza's skillfully crafted oil on canvas pieces are scale replicas of traditional Mexican candies.

In Joel Castro's work as a visual artist and label maker, the image of the traveling clown has been a persistent sign. His stickers with form of smiles can be found stuck on humble found objects that he has selected carefully. Irak Morales shares the austerity of his popular consumer materials but with a cynical commentary on the hierarchies of taste in the field of art. For this exhibition he presents a work of "Edomex actionism" consisting of a *Tzompantli* made from the backs of bags of corn chips bought in Vienna. Josué Mejía shows a sample of Mexican coins with pre-Hispanic motifs converted into weapons. Retractable knives made by himself

following the instructions of a free instructive on the Internet.

Ilse Monroy's work involves fashion design and on this occasion she presents an outfit made from a school uniform turned into a backpack that is the support for her Memory Survival Kits. In the garment, tiny objects, cut-outs, waste goods and petrified candy are carefully assembled as if held back by time. Gabriela Manzano's work is also in dialogue with this articulation between memory, material culture and childhood. Although in her case the pieces point to the nefarious setbacks of neoliberalism through her own materialities as is the case of "In Mexico three children and nine women die every day, murdered": a tapestry attached as fragmented members of toy dolls. In addition, we show a video performance by the non-objective artist, *Merolico* and magician Melquiades Herrera (1943-2003) where, through the character of a street vendor, he shows the transformation of the city around 1993 through the display of unusual street merchandise.

Showing this group of pieces in a nomadic museum like MUME — which in this case takes the form of a rolling stand — provides continuity to this type of artistic work conceived for perpetual migration. Artworks that migrate materials, spaces, aspects and languages, even behind the backs of the languages that seek to fix it.