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Harold Ancart, Kevin Beasley, Mateo López

February 27 – April 26

Opening Thursday, February 27, 6 – 8pm

Casey Kaplan is pleased to announce an exhibition of solo projects by Mateo López (b. 1978, Bogotá), Harold Ancart (b. 1980, Brussels), and Kevin Beasley (b. 1985, Lynchburg, Virginia).

Mateo López's work is an investigation of drawing itself, and the spaces between its mental and physical actions. Crucial to this is an examination of how drawing moves from line to form and object and a conflation of the boundaries between two and three-dimensions. Through the process of observation itself, López begins a dialog between two seemingly opposed motivations: the making of a realistic representation of his surroundings and an investigation of their implications.

López presents a new installation comprised of drawings, sculptures, as well as an animation, an element that is new to his practice. Following a single character – a drafting compass fashioned into a dancer, the protagonist himself presents a contradiction. He is a tool designed for rigidity and precision that instead makes loose, gestural movements. Tracing clockwise or counterclockwise, he begins to form a series of objects: a clock, a door, a globe, among others. Exhibited alongside the animation itself are these artifacts of the dancer's actions crafted meticulously out of paper, simultaneously suggesting a choreography that creates play and narrative and a drawing extending from the second to third dimension.

Harold Ancart's work recombines and repeats familiar tropes and forms in a series of permutations, functioning almost as a stutter. Ancart has previously created works in which lines of pure pigment traverse the walls of the exhibition space, as well as found images of pools and tropical landscapes that have been sullied with burn marks, all sharing a sense of immediacy in their creation – the laying of a mark or a gesture.

Ancart continues his previous explorations in a series of large-scale drawings titled "Ultra Deep Fried". Pre-cut forms of vegetation are layered onto paper as he creates textural, black and white backgrounds with oil stick. It is traces of their immediacy that are consistent throughout, vestiges of the lush color layered into the negative vegetal spaces are found across the surface. For the first time, Ancart arranges these works as a set, with their compositions sprawling across four panels. Their vibrant foliage and color splashes imply a distance that suggests a fascination with another place. This sense of longing recurs throughout Ancart's work, finding a parallel in a tension specific to drawing itself – the simultaneous desire to create and communicate a future while acting in relation to the past; a process through which motivations and intentions are continuously reversed. Additionally, he presents two sculptures immediately reminiscent of furniture, with a proportion and surface that denies function.

Kevin Beasley's work utilizes media including sculpture, photography, sound, and performance to navigate notions of origin and identity. Familiar objects, personal effects and sound elements from various sources are manipulated, distorted, and mixed, acts of removal from their original context that simultaneously investigate their histories. Through this process, they are broken into minutiae and partial forms and also expanded – gaining resonance and new meaning.

For the exhibition, Beasley has sourced approximately 4000 cassette tapes from family, friends, record stores and the Internet. Ranging from commercially sold audiobooks, popular music, independent labels, mixtapes, and home recordings, they have been cut and spliced together to create 52 reels, holding approximately 40 hours

of sound and music each. These reels exist as mixes – combinations of various sounds by a number of authors that play constantly during the gallery's opening hours, corresponding to a cycle of human consistency. Spanning intentions, genres, and decades, the resultant sound demonstrates a complex relationship with the history of the work's materials. Their obsolescence at the same time triggers a series of familiarities and emotional connections.

Played through a reel-to-reel player, an incompatible device, both sides of each tape are heard at once. Interrupting even the most familiar of referents is a layered, alternate track (albeit played in reverse), an ambiguous and sometimes unintelligible sound that asserts itself as an unknown entity. The work hinges on the presence of a listener yet the exhibition itself represents only a partial span of its length with the same sound never played twice. Over the course of the exhibition, performances by Beasley and invited guests will occur in the space, with a live recording made on the reels. Replacing the previous recordings, these newly introduced elements contribute to the ever-evolving nature of the work and its experience; it is growing and deteriorating at the same time.

Mateo López was recently a participant in the Rolex Mentor-Protégé program alongside William Kentridge. In 2013, his work, *A Trip from Here to There*, was the starting point for an exhibition of the same title at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include *Travesía* Cuatro Gallery, Madrid, 2013, Casas Riegner Gallery, Bogotá, 2012, Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo, 2011 and *Gasworks*, London, 2010. Group exhibitions include: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2013, The Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, 2013, The Drawing Room, London, 2012 and the 8th Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, 2011.

Harold Ancart has recently had solo exhibitions at Veneklasen Werner, Berlin, 2014, *Clearing*, Brooklyn, 2013, and Xavier Hufkens, Brussels, 2013. Additionally, Ancart has participated in group exhibitions at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, 2013, Palais de Toyko, Paris, 2013, WIELS / Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels, 2012 and Sculpture Center, Queens, 2011.

Kevin Beasley is currently an artist in residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem. He will participate in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, curated by Anthony Elms, Michelle Grabner and Stuart Comer, opening March 7. His work was included the 2013 Queens International as well as group exhibitions at Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, 2013, and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, 2012. His work "I Want My Spot Back" was performed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 2012 as part of Ralph Lemon's "Some Sweet Day."

For further information, please contact Loring Randolph, loring@caseykaplangallery.com

GALLERY HOURS: TUESDAY – SATURDAY, 10:00AM – 6:00PM



Outside the comfort zone

Working side by side with William Kentridge in his studio, protégé Mateo López learns to crash through his training in precision drawing and make art with his hands instead of his head. With help from his mentor, López finds how creativity derives from embracing chaos.

By Amei Wallach

"Mateo comes out of training as an architect, with an architect's way of drawing. It may be fine to have that very precise, fine instrument, but I think it would be useful to think in a different way, a rough way, to do something that's messy. In the long term the work has to allow the vulnerability of the self into it. So I've encouraged him to draw himself walking, to perform in front of a camera. [The act of drawing] yourself walking through an animated book is a fine start. It gives you all the supplementary images that can amplify who you are, what you are thinking about. From that you'll build up a rich vocabulary with which to keep working: Here's something else I haven't drawn, here's something else I haven't thought before. You have to open up the work if you are going to go on working another 30, 40 years."

William Kentridge

It was February 2012 when Mateo López first met the great South African artist William Kentridge. López was one of three visual arts finalists for the year-long Rolex Arts Initiative programme, and he was five days late for his interview. The other finalists had already come and gone by the time the young Colombian artist arrived at Kentridge's studio in Johannesburg.

"I was feeling really bad," López recalls. "There were problems with my visa. There is no South African embassy in Colombia, so they had to send my passport to Venezuela. It was a mess and the visa arrived a week late. But in the end I feel like it was destiny, because I had more time alone with William."

Kentridge's studio is set at the edge of the lawns and flowerbeds surrounding the Johannesburg house in which he grew up and raised his own family. In the studio's high, white central room, where drawings-in-progress, prints and experiments in storytelling are pinned to the wall, he set López the task of drawing some of the objects that function as stock characters in Kentridge's repertoire: a horse, an old-fashioned dial telephone. López transcribed each with the fastidious line he had learnt in his art and architectural studies in Colombia. "And then William said, 'Now we are going to tear up the drawings'," López remembers with undiminished wonder.

Out of the scraps of López's drawings, as well as his own, Kentridge "collaged" a three-dimensional paper sculpture of a prancing horse. "For me that was radical," López says. "It was as though a door could open to another way of working."

That was when Mateo López understood that the Rolex programme was going to challenge his way of looking at art and the world. In life and work, Kentridge and his protégé are a study in contrasts, and that has made all the difference in their dynamic encounter.

"I am very shy," López says, "like a shell." Beneath his smiles and polite accommodations, Mateo López hides a diffident reserve.

Drawings of himself drawing are the closest he came to breaking through that shell to make an appearance in the video he submitted when asked to apply for the Rolex Arts Initiative. The drawings were stand-ins for López as he narrated his themes and the succession of exhibitions that mark him as a rising artist of interest on the international scene.

Every tiny splatter

There's a restraint and exactitude to the drawings, which López sometimes cuts out along the outlines. He'll articulate every tiny splatter spreading from the diminutive drawn ink blots that attract the eye amidst the planters made from discarded tin cans, the scale models of railway stations and the cut-out paper vines draped over books and chairs in his installation *Travelling without Moving*, which spent early 2013 as the centrepiece of an exhibition, *A Trip from Here to There*, at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York.

"Mateo has this amazing precision," says William Kentridge. "When he cuts something out, everyone in the studio gathers to watch."

Kentridge himself has the loose-limbed ebullience and alert presence of a performer. The South African master of drawing, animation, sculpture, performance, video, film, theatre and opera design and direction is an arresting figure on film and on-stage, in the black trousers and white shirt he also wears in his Johannesburg studio. With or without his pince-nez, which he wields like a stage prop, his take-it-all-in eyes under shaggy grey brows dart piercing glances or retreat into reflection. He'll smother a quizzical smile as he grabs pen or charcoal and executes wide gestures with arm and hand.

López, on the other hand, keeps arm and pencil close as he renders his meticulous lines. He hides his eyes behind conservative glasses, quietly observes and thinks things through. Then he makes a drawing. Kentridge's animated drawings can change direction on an evanescent thought or vagrant emotion. His meandering line doesn't just accumulate meaning as it curls and unfurls to describe a cat, a typewriter, a pin-suited business man, a telephone, a cat's cradle of tangled wires. That line creates meaning through the relationships it contrives, the stories that emerge from what Kentridge calls "the activity of making". The process of catching meaning as it metamorphoses into other meaning, other questions, other recognitions is what interests him about making art.

For López, meaning is the starting point. "I'm an artist from a generation that has a very conceptual approach to art practice," he says. "Every step you make starts with a concept." He begins with a big idea, which often has to do with time, memory and the porous boundaries between reality and fiction. From there, he exhaustively plots the drawings and installations through which he will explore it.

Paper shards

When they met in February 2012, Kentridge was working his own way through preparations for the six Norton Lectures he had been invited to present later that northern spring at Harvard University. Kentridge conceived the lectures as Six Drawing Lessons. And torn paper shards that his hands resolve into a variety of collaged silhouettes of a horse in motion would play an essential role in those lectures.

Kentridge bent the Norton Lectures to his own ends, presenting them as a multimedia rumination/performance, complete with orchestra, in which he was part cosmic thinker, part stand-up comic, part questing artist in his studio. The mutating paper shards, projected on a video screen behind him, became a leitmotif throughout.

"This is what the artist does: takes the fragments, the shards and rearranges them," he said in the last lecture. "The meaning is always a construction, a projection and not an edifice, something to be made, and not found. There is always a radical incoherence and radical instability."

At the studio that February, López witnessed the rhythms of a multitasking studio, as Kentridge prepared the lectures while juggling collaborations on other projects whose themes, strategies and activities would interact and intersect with the Norton Lectures and one another.

For Documenta 13, in Kassel, Germany, Kentridge had been exchanging stories with the science historian and philosopher Peter Galison on the inventions of modernity, the standardization of time and the effect of both on colonialism. The collaboration grew into *The Refusal of Time*, a monumental installation that included short films and animations, as well as a Rube Goldberg machine as sound-emitting sculpture.

In turn, Kentridge's collaborations with Galison, the dancer Dada Masilo, the composer Philip Miller and the video-maker Catherine Meyburgh morphed into the performance piece, *Refuse the Hour*.

Mateo López saw them all. He travelled to Cambridge in the U.S. to hear two of the Norton Lectures, to Kassel for *The Refusal of Time*, and to Amsterdam for *Refuse the Hour*, where Kentridge tried to interest López in performance. Performing in public? It wasn't in his DNA. Instead, López suggested a dialogue in drawings, in which each artist would make a drawing in response to the other, as he had done with the older, established Colombian artist José Antonio Suárez Londoño. That wasn't quite what Kentridge had in mind.

"Presumably the interesting thing of being a protégé in this programme is that you want something to expand, want new thoughts and new ways of working," he says. In the end they agreed that in November López would spend a substantial chunk of time working in Johannesburg.

In the meantime, López, who was accustomed to working alone, pondered the bustle and stimulation of collaboration that he'd witnessed in Kentridge's studio. For Kentridge, the easy access to provocative artists from different disciplines was a very good reason to remain in Johannesburg, no matter his international demand. In Kentridge's example, López found verification of his own choice to stay home in Colombia, which shares with South Africa a violent history. "Both William and I are coming from conflicted social situations," he says. López does not want to confront his history head-on as the generation before him did, but it is there underneath, informing both the subject and the possibilities of his work. In London, he had been unable to find a watchmaker capable of devising a mechanism for his paper watch that would run backwards, touching on his themes of memory and time, of "going backwards". No problem for watchmakers in Bogotá, where everyone is accustomed to making do, through upheavals and deprivations. "We are very used to improvising," he notes.

A few months into his mentoring year with Kentridge, López completed *Avenida Primavera, Casa No.2*, an installation of rooms conceived as a walk-in book of often three-dimensional drawings. Taking a hint from the studio practice of his Rolex mentor, he sought out collaborators for experiments in sound (ambient noise from his current apartment) and smell (the perfume of old paper). "Talking with William influenced the whole exhibition," he says.

When he sent Kentridge photographs of the installation, he received a poetic critique and also the observation that these rooms suggested the setting for a performance.

A delicate dance

Then, beginning in November, for nearly a month and a half, López moved into Kentridge's Johannesburg studio. During the first week, Kentridge introduced López to techniques of animation and gave him a stack of pages from an old Oxford English Dictionary to draw on. Kentridge had his own stack of pages from a duplicate dictionary. Each of them would make autobiographical drawings of themselves walking. These might become separate films or a joint project.

"You're not saying, 'Here's a way of making an animated film', but through the actual making of an animated film you're thinking about what it is to put yourself in the film," Kentridge says. "How hard-edged can it be? I think for Mateo it would be useful to do something that's messy, that's less precise."

It is a delicate dance for mentor and protégé to work closely together, but Kentridge and his wife, the rheumatologist Anne Stanwix, have an affable generosity that encompasses a large circle of friends and family. Kentridge went to great lengths to care for his young studio-mate, including a top-speed car ride through Johannesburg in order to make it to the foundry in time for López to witness his first bronze casting.

A week into López's residency, Kentridge went off on the European tour of his *Refuse the Hour* performance. López stayed in the studio, making drawing after drawing, filming each version from above. He drew himself walking, but he also drew squares of colour, scientific diagrams of hands, a clock whose numbers fall down into a heap and fly away. He took lunch with Stanwix or the studio staff, at home in the Kentridge kitchen.

On a damp December afternoon after Kentridge's return, the mentor stopped by the table where López was working yet more charcoal into a cloud of smoke that billowed behind his walking figure.

Kentridge watched for a moment. "I would keep working: erase and add to the meaning. See how far it can go," he said. "Nothing to lose."

"If I make it any darker, it disappears," López protested.

"That's nothing," Kentridge urged. "See what happens if it all goes black. You've got it in a neat form now. Try a brush, thick charcoal, erasers. Push much, much further."

Back in his Bogotá studio, with its walled courtyard and the kitchen-in-progress, to which he hopes to lure other kinds of artists and artisans, López sat at his own drawing table, making precise plans and diagrams of the paper combs and dishes, the lounge chairs and lamps with which he will furnish Casa Disorientada, a floating house that is a collaboration with the architect Lucas Oberlaender for Art Basel in 2013.

"I understand what William was suggesting, but it's more about the process than the final result. It's about taking me out of my comfort zone," López said. "I can be messy when I'm working, but it's not me. What I understand from our conversations is that I could try not to control things too much, try to create something from chaos. That is interesting."

Messy drawing may not be in the DNA of Mateo López, but it is possible, after all, that performance is. Working with collaborators, he's been improvising a performance piece. It's centred on his collection of salsa vinyls, musical evidence of the historical and racial connections between Colombia and South Africa. There's video in the performance, also animation. Most of all, there's Mateo López, out there in public, making meaning.

Amei Wallach is a New York-based arts writer and film-maker. She is president emeritus of the U.S. chapter of AICA (Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art).

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MoMA

Mateo Lopez: A Trip from Here to There

March 15–July 30, 2013

The Paul J. Sachs Drawings Galleries, third floor

Over the course of two years, from 2008 to 2010, the artist Mateo López traveled through his native Colombia, from Bogotá to Cali to Medellín. Crisscrossing vast expanses of territory via Vespa, López made drawings rendering the ordinary objects he encountered in precise detail. In a country stressed by constant conflict between government forces, revolutionary guerrillas, drug cartels, and paramilitary groups, traveling—and the drawing that served as his diary—were acts of both endurance and contemplation. Using López's *Viaje sin movimiento*—an installation of his drawings from this journey—as a focal point, *A Trip from Here to There* explores practices and works generated by walking, wandering, and travel. As members of exploratory expeditions and surveys, painters and draftsmen have long played key roles in the plotting and investigation of place. Beginning in the second half of the 20th century, as artists increasingly emphasized the process by which an artwork is made, road trips and other journeys became both medium and subject. In some works, a walk or sojourn is precisely documented via maps and charts, dates and times, while in others, wandering's inherent detours and deviations are exploited, resulting in collages of impressions or graphs of explored terrain. For some artists, drawing is both nomadic and solitary, while for others it is a way to engage with one's environment and its inhabitants.

Organized by Jodi Hauptman, Curator, Department of Drawings, and Luis Pérez-Oramas, The Estrellita Brodsky Curator of Latin American Art.

TRAVESIA CUATRO

CASI UN OBJETO/ALMOST AN OBJECT

2nd of February, 2013 - 20th of April, 2013

Mateo López. Casi un Objeto

While looking through my sketchbooks I came across a series of drawings, annotations and objects. The truth is, I couldn't recall if I had actually seen those things before or just imagined them. Almost an Object, the present exhibition, includes some of the pieces found in those sketchbooks.

Drawing is the main focus of my work; I'm interested in the possibilities it offers of being two or three-dimensional, planning and carrying out and even between what is real and what is made up.

I remember doing the staircase –that is, a sketch of a staircase– after a visit to the gallery. I imagined this site-specific piece as a spatial drawing. I had done this in a way in my sketchbook, crossing over onto two pages. By taking the measurements of the tread and riser (25 x 20 cm) at a 90 degree angle and repeating the pattern, the stairs could go on indefinitely.

Nearby, the series Spatial Drawings, No. 2 shows an organically formed automated pencil hovering in the air. The literal transcription from the page in my sketchbook reads: ...repetitive trompe l'oeil.

A series of 108 charcoal-on-paper, 100 x 70 cm drawings titled Apartment 402 is located on a pallet on the floor. This fragmented drawing represents my apartment in Bogota. It is a full scale architect's plan of the apartment, totaling 55 square meters.

The graphite rock is a drawing.

The series of drawings titled A4 are inspired by the technical drawing I did when I studied architecture. The fact is, I didn't want to be an architect. Once I decided to study visual arts, I kept drawing with the same tools and formats. Hence the spaces and objects I design are not very functional. The Draftsman's Chair, which has a 33 degree inclination –the same inclination I have when drawing– is a clear example.

Based on annotations such as "...draw the sections of an apple that has been cut up," "...A4 sheet in layers" or "...most of the things that surround us were initially drawn" the following drawings began appearing on my desk: The Broken Down A4 Sheet, the same format used for the series of drawings A4, Paper Compass, Folded Book, Drop and Apple. The Celestial Sphere is a paper assemblage which is perforated by the star chart. Drawing the constellations there is the same exercise as picking out the constellations from the heavens.

Paper Font, a 59 x 42 cm lithograph, is the result of a fixation with folding and joining points. This typographic alphabet, which includes the letters from A to Z and the numbers, is made up of raised characters abstracted by the folds in the paper. This matrix gives way to the series Paper Poems. (Dimensions vary.) Every so often I decide to use this font to write down sentences or words that I record in my notebooks. On this occasion, it says: Things are never what they seem.

Mateo López. 2013

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VITAMIN D2: NEW PERSPECTIVES IN DRAWING, Phaidon Press, 2013.

MATEO LOPEZ

In the hands of the young Colombian artist Mateo Lopez, drawing is more than a medium: it is a way of understanding and, indeed, inhabiting the world. Which is to say not only that we come to understand the world by depicting it, but also that, for the artist, the world can be seen as its own kind of drawing, where drawing indicates the planning, design and conceptualization that takes place prior to a thing's completion. According to Lopez, if we view the world as a drawing that surrounds us - 'a building was a drawing at some point, that aircraft I hear crossing the sky, the plan of this city' -we must also understand that 'an image is not flat; it is an atmosphere, it contains time and space.'

In Lopez's work, this translates to a preoccupation with the multi-dimensional possibilities for drawing on both a literal and conceptual level. He began his post-art-school career in Bogota as a technical draughtsman for local magazines while also maintaining a standard studio practice. His artistic breakthrough came in 2006 at an exhibition at Galeria Casas Riegner in which he established his studio in the gallery throughout the duration of the show and set about painstakingly reconstructing the tools and materials of his craft. In some cases the translation was minimal: for example, drawn sheets of lined paper nearly identical to their two-dimensional originals. Joining these facsimiles were three-dimensional drawings of 3D objects made by sketching and folding to create trompe l'oeil paper sculptures -like a box for black ink made with the same ink that the original box contained. Lopez reproduced each object as it was sold, thereby maintaining the consistency of the exhibition display and locating the objects' value in the labour itself.

Since the Casas Riegner show, Lopez has continued to explore drawing as a form of accumulation in context. In *Diario de Motocicleta, Taller Portátil No. 25* (Motorcycle Diary, Portable Studio No. 25, 2007) he travelled across Colombia with a mobile studio on his Vespa containing two changes of clothes, a camera, notebooks and drawing materials that he used to document his journey. *Deriva* (Drift, 2009) began with an artist's book commission and ended in a two-part project: first, an illustrated book that took as its subject the activity of making the book itself, and second, an installation that included a recycled wood module on which were displayed the drawings, notes and diagrams that went into the book's making. (In a further twist the plans for the module were included in the publication.) Here the finished product is synonymous with the planning process. It is nothing more nor less than the imagination rendered visible, with drawing as the conduit to this imaginative life. Recent projects include *Ping Pong*-an ongoing collaboration with the Colombian master draughtsman Jose Antonio Suarez Londono-as well as further variations on the mis en abyme of the studio-cum- exhibition space.

2010's *El Palacio de Papel* (Paper Palace) took place in a yellow polyhedron based on a prototype made out of paper of which several versions were on view, while *Nowhere Man* (2011) at the Drawing Room, London, showcased an anonymous artist's workroom complete with evidence of earlier projects including the book *Deriva*. What gives Lopez's work its particular appeal is the evident dedication and skill of the draughtsmanship involved, coupled with a conceptual lightness and whimsy that is integral to the artist's vision of the world. In Lopez's humble assessment, 'What I most enjoy is the informality and daily life of drawing.'

Claire Gilman

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
ROTARY CONNECTION

Organized by Loring Randolph

Étienne Chambaud (b. 1980 Mulhouse, France) Isabelle Cornaro (b. 1974, France)
Julia Dault (b. 1977, Toronto, Canada)
Jose Dávila (b. 1974, Guadalajara, Mexico) Jason Dodge (b. 1969, Newton, PA)
Ryan Gander (b. 1976, Chester, UK)
Liam Gillick (b. 1964, Aylesbury, UK)
Andrew Kuo (b. 1977, New York, NY)
Mateo López (b. 1978, Bogota, Colombia)
Benoit Maïre (b. 1978, Pessac, France)
Arthur Ou (b. 1974, Taipei, Taiwan)
Marlo Pascual (b. 1972, Nashville, TN)
Pietro Roccasalva (b. 1970, Modica, Italy)

EXHIBITION DATES: JANUARY 5 – FEBRUARY 11, 2012
OPENING: THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 6:00-8:00PM

Casey Kaplan is pleased to inaugurate 2012 with a group exhibition, *Rotary Connection*, organized by the gallery's director, Loring Randolph. The exhibition brings together 13 artists who, despite different approaches, all challenge conventional models of artistic processes. A web of interwoven art historical references and ideologies connects the sculptures, paintings, and images on view in an installation that aspires to incite multi-disciplinary discussions with varied readings relating to themes such as: the displacement of the figure and the subject, the phenomenology of the viewer, and the deconstruction of systems. In *Rotary Connection*, what is visible is as important as what is unseen.

Étienne Chambaud's two sculptures are objects that have been formed and deformed through subversive acts, emphasizing the fragile balance of context, representation, and meaning. *Objets Rédimé (les livres)*, 2010, consists of three cast glass books that have been dropped to their demise from the gallery's ceiling to the floor of the exhibition space. « *Atlas*, », 2011, presents a found atlas with holes cut into its pages, displayed at its center, and leveled flat resting on a plinth. The remaining object confuses and combines political and geographical boundaries.

Isabelle Cornaro's practice begins with documents and archives belonging to history and culture. Utilizing these images and documents as a framework, Cornaro creates, through various processes and mediums, artworks that question and deconstruct the systems of representation that these sources denote (of objects, life, architecture, and nature). Based on historical images of landscaped gardens the exhibition presents three drawings created from wisps of hair and cut paper, plus an ethereal spray painting, entitled, *Of Cinematic*, 2011, where nuances of compositions in Impressionist paintings have been rapidly captured.

Julia Dault's artworks harness the limitations and the contingencies of gesture, time, and material, as their subject matter. Dault's most recent sculptures consist of draped, un-stretched paintings that layer vinyl, pleather, and other materials of costume and display. While taut, Dault scrapes through previously applied layers of paint with a simple toothed tool to reveal both singular and repetitive gestures, additionally exposing metallic, reflective, transparent or vibrantly colored under surfaces.

Jose Dávila takes simple industrial, building materials with appropriated images as his medium to create artworks that contest the inherent qualities of modern architecture and other constructed spaces. In, *Topology of Memory*, 2011, Dávila has removed famous artworks from their surroundings, exposing the interior and exterior sites as the subjects. *Mirage No. 2*, 2011, is reminiscent of a number of past artworks, including Kazimir Malevich's *White on White* from 1918. However, in Dávila's case, the wall acts as the canvas within a series of receding vinyl outlined frames, as panes of glass slip out of place to create an illusion of form.

A copper bell hangs in the third gallery with no clapper inside it to ring. The only time it sang out was when attached to the end of the broom of chimney sweep, Jonas Vytas Keršys while he cleared ash and soot from chimneys in Vilnius, Lithuania. This past journey and the bell's sound are now an imagined occurrence – immortalized in the mind - by all who see its shell. **Jason Dodge's** displaced objects tell a story of their history as evidence of a transformation that has already taken place through Dodge's own actions and those of others.

Ryan Gander's art tells a story in hopes of activating the viewer's imagination, directing them to begin to remember or to misremember history in order to create a new "future history" of art. Multiple fictional characters and personas, processes, subject matters, and media, function within a system of production that Gander has created where the spectator must believe that the world is a constructed reality, one where anything can be true. An exhibition poster for a fictitious show entitled "You need to see this beauty broken down" and a fragmented historical icon direct the viewer to fill in the gaps.

In the late 1990s, **Liam Gillick** created an artwork consisting of a set of instructions to paint swatches on a wall to try to replicate the color of coca-cola, challenging the instructed person to re-examine their relationship to architecture, as well as the relationship of art production to social and economic structures. Three drawings in the exhibition are presented in the three rooms of the gallery, and show Gillick's own graded attempts, *Tango colored conference room*, *Pepsi colored foyer* and *Seven-up colored lobby*, that additionally comment on the implications of the aesthetics in these structured places of temporal occupation.

What if this guy was a figment of my imagination, 2011, **Andrew Kuo's** painting, quantifies the nonrepresentational – thoughts and emotions – in a mimetic relationship between text and image. Typical of his diagrammatic paintings that draw on the language of info-graphic images, the work contains fields of color that abstract a depiction of a 360-degree book hovering above a corresponding key. While it points towards modernist geometric abstraction, Kuo's work is imbued with a unique complexity as it functions to document his daily life and oscillations of his psyche.

In many of his works, **Mateo López** creates sculpture from drawings, and then uses drawing as a means, a process, and an investigation into the narrative. Sometimes the work contains studio-like scenarios, often functioning to blur the line between production and display. By creating a system of lines on uniform rectangles of paper and creasing these lines, López delineates a 3-dimensional typography out of paper. His *Paper Poems* unfold on two shelves, changing daily over the course of the exhibition. Day 15 reads: "Time has" on the upper shelf, and "beaten us again" below.

Benoit Maïre's practice is rooted in philosophy and theory. His paintings, installations, and films aim to create new systems of aesthetics through an investigation of whether an image (or an object) can be a concept and the distance that exists between the visual and the textual. In the exhibition, all three sculptures function around themes of the gaze. A bronze head of the Medusa faces her opposing reflection, Alberto Giacometti's *Nose*, 1945 (cast 1965), is poised on a tripod as a camera, and a new sculpture, *conjugaison du 16 novembre 2011: la question d'amie*, is a vitrine with objects and images positioned to be experienced by the viewer from a specific vantage point.

Arthur Ou's oeuvre includes photography, sculpture, and installation. His practice is engaged with questions of modernism, historiography, and documentation and their roles within visual culture. The four photographs on view, *Primer 1 – 4*, 2011, assimilate two different images and subjects, landscape, and studio photography, onto one plane in film through double exposures on a single negative. In this collapsed space, wire sculptures draw gestural lines over rock face expanses.

Over the past few years, **Marlo Pascual** has investigated the malleability of the photograph as physical material. In a recent series, Pascual scales and reprints found images of performers on watercolor paper, and then folds the paper at specific points to distort the image. Pascual's latest image of a woman standing in front of a curtain is rendered life size, the figure engulfed by the drape of the fabric.

Pietro Roccasalva's practice includes a wide-range of media such as painting, performance, sculpture and photography, that create what the artist calls "situazione d'opera" ("a worksite"), in which images and iconographies circulate in an ongoing process that eventually comes back to its departure point: painting and its power of simulacrum. The work in the show belongs to a series of white marble pieces titled, *Che cosa sono le nuvole (What clouds are)*, which materialize the artist's refusal to participate in a number of exhibitions. Embedded into a wall, each marble is the size of an A4 sheet of paper and is carved with the details of the show (date, venue, list of artists participating, title, and curator). The letters are then filled with black ink with the exception of Roccasalva's name, which is left indecipherable.

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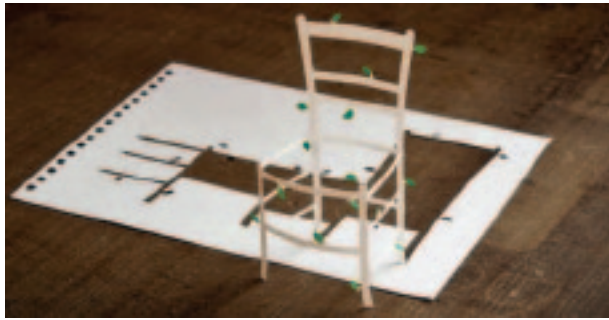


BIENAL DO ENSAIOS DE GEOPOÉTICA MERCOSUL



BIENAL
DO ENSAIOS DE
GEOPOÉTICA
MERCOSUL





Notas de campo. 2011. Drawing and sculpture in paper. 8 x 14.8 x 21 cm.
Photo: Fábio Del Re.

MATEO LOPEZ Bogotá, Colombia, 1978.

López's work is driven by drawing. Rather than being clearly defined, it is internalised as a way of exploring and depicting the world. His drawing is not simply a matter of tracing something on paper with a pencil; it involves organising and developing ideas, elaborating thought, testing and reflecting on its own limits. Drawing in his work is explored and released from its ties, expanding its possibilities. The artist's practice demonstrates his own actions on the paper. Part of his interest has involved projects that incorporate the act of travel in which the reality of this movement and experience takes shape and is documented through notes, drawings and models, transforming the practice of drawing into language and record. His work develops out of the process, and his installations often reveal this by including as part of the work the real objects that were used to make it. In this sense the artist also uses these devices to create others as an imitation of reality, in pencil and paper, which confuse the viewer. Lopez reflects on the value of drawing as text. "Are reading and observing the same thing?" he asks.

In early June, López embarked on a route that would take him to the town of Ilópolis, recording his experience of the journey by making notes, drawings and collecting small objects. His drawing ability and great capacity for observation, together with the historical references of the town formed the basis for the creative process of making the final work. Mateo López organised a series of activities with the local community and exhibited his work at the Museu do Pão in June.

ALEXIA TALA: All contemporary artists have an idea that drives their creative practice. What is it that drives your work? Is it concerned with capturing reality through drawing, the manual production of the work, or are there other reasons?

MATEO LÓPEZ: I think the practice of drawing is the most interesting thing, the issues that it raises between representation, space and writing. Drawing is millennial. Several texts contest the

most accurate definition of drawing, people want to learn it and master it.

For me, each drawing is a test, trial and error. I think that the best way of talking about drawing is through drawing itself.

A.T.: Most people like to capture their experiences of travel through photography. In your case you capture the world through drawing, as you are an artist with a special ability in that technique. I wonder if, when you start travelling, the act of drawing becomes a way of depicting what you see, or whether what you see is the motivation and inspiration for drawing other things. So how do you show your experience of travel without using photography?

M.L.: In my case it's both of the things you mention in your question. I think of drawing as a way of noting those things that we find, we see, read, hear or say. We make notes or keep memories of a place. In the same way, those things that we see become motivation to see others and draw other things.

When you travel to a place that you don't know you have a sensation of unfamiliarity. You are always asking yourself questions, converting the currency, making associations between the nature here or there (in your place of origin), how you see the sky, what the geography is like, the climate, the town, the people, finding a fruit you don't know and associating it with the flavour and shape of another one, trying to translate words and things. That state of discovery is interesting, you become alert and ask many questions. You write a name, a word, a sentence, do a sketch or, if there's time, make a detailed drawing.

Actually, I also like taking photos. I've made a few videos, depending on the purpose of the work. I think that taking photographs or making videos during the journey is like making notes in a notebook... I think that nowadays there are a variety of tools for making maps or for travelling: photos, video, sound, GPS, Google maps etc. Well, what you do with all that afterwards is up to each individual.

Mateo López



Drawing Ink (4 Rotring Boxes), 2006. Ink on paper. 3 1/4 x 1 1/4 x 1/8 in. (9,7 x 3,2 x 1,7 cm.).

Lucky Strike Box, 2006. Ink on paper.

Reflections Around Drawing

IVONNE PINI

The rethinking of draftsmanship is one of the characteristics of contemporary art. And in that reflection the issue is not only to project it from the standpoint of “expanded draftsmanship” that breaks with traditional materials and supports, but also to revisit the meaning of the resource of two seemingly basic elements: paper and pencil. The practice brings together mental and material action, with the operation of a bidimensionality that can also become an investigation of the surrounding space.

Mateo López (Bogotá, 1976) is fascinated by drawing, and this makes it possible for him to facilitate a dialog between two opposed artistic traditions: one that sees art as acting as a faithful representation of what is perceived and opts for realistic representation, and one that sees it as the possibility of exploring, question, and even transgress the meaning of what is observed.

Thus López’s interest in artists like Sol Lewitt and Ramírez Villamizar. Lewitt’s idea of repetition, of a dichotomy between conception, opens itself up to creative processes in which exercises of serialized drawing, based on a specified format, recognize the value of chance. Meanwhile, the practice of drawing as an observation of the organic is significant in the explorations carried out by Ramírez Villamizar on seashells and landscapes. This aperture to lines of expanded draftsmanship does not mean a distance from more traditional conceptions, such as José Antonio Suárez’s, valuing an encounter with the masters with a craft that in its daily practice allows for other ways of approaching the real.

Inside and in between, 2006. Drawings and objects on paper: variable dimensions. Galeria Casas Riegner, Bogotá.



From the exhibition Anecdotic Topography, 2006.
Topographical representation built with three-dimensional objects.

Detail, Union Camera, 2008. Made to life-scale with Tobiaron cardboard and ink.
Working-Class Neighborhood, 2008. Paper.



Portable Workshop No. 25, 24 hours, from Motorcycle Diary, 2007. Tire, enamel.



Detalle.

Another name that appears as a point of reference in his thought is Bruno Munari's. The texts written by the Italian artist and designer, for instance "How Are Objects Born?", interest López for their proposal of an approach to the idea and construction of an object: "I see as that initial idea, a notation—a diagram, then a more formal plan with measurements— proportions, then a construction. The idea onto the paper, and later the three-dimensional. In sum, the issue is to arrive at the materialization of a shape and the selection of materials. He is able to explain, starting from nature, geometric shapes and everyday uses, the way in which our body and our ideas define forms." (1) Since his earliest drawings, López proposes a revaluation of what is seen, a questioning, showing how a supposed investigation of "truth" in representation goes beyond imitation and allows us to examine that which the artists calls the internal reality of objects. (2) The idea of an objective, certain world is questioned already in his earliest works; *El ideal de lo práctico* (2004), *Mímesis*, and *Fotocopias* (both from 2005), are simulacra of the real and compel thoughts about how true is the objective environment he analyzes, and whether it can be replaced with simulacra that are far from mere formal exercises.

In 2006, López presented his exhibition *Adentro y en medio*. He set up his studio in a room at Casas Riegner Gallery. Breaking with the traditional notion of an exclusionary space belonging only to the artist and his creative process, commonly closed to those who are not part of his immediate circle, López created a public space, a kind of large-sized architectural model inside which he worked for as long as the show lasted. It wasn't a space where he limited himself to sharing his work with the viewer. The entire space was filled with facsimiles of the tools and materials used in drawing: sheets of lined or grid paper were drawn and colored, creating a particular paradoxical relationship between the false and the true. What do those terms designate when the concepts can be interchanged?

Besides the ambiguity thus generated, López was able to start on a pathway that continued in later works: His complex way of understanding draftsmanship, his substitution of the "real" object, drives him to propose a series of facsimiles that allude to dissimilar cultural references, showing the variety of approaches that can emerge when the specific context is altered, building poetics that never cease to explore the meaning of the idea of representation. bringing draftsmanship beyond the

two dimensions, transforming drawing into something inhabitable. His original education in architecture, dropped when he felt they imposed constraints he would rather break, still count when we note his interest in space, in the transit from bi- to three- dimensionality, projecting drawing as something tangible in the space he intervenes. López's complex way of understanding draftsmanship, his substitution of the "real" object, drives him to propose a series of facsimiles that allude to dissimilar cultural references, showing the variety of approaches that can emerge when the specific context is altered, building poetics that never cease to explore the meaning of the idea of representation.

More and more, López's quests are connected with the idea of a path, of motion along a course, but also with documenting real or imaginary situations, and with the possibility of building archives. *Diario de motocicleta* (2007) is an example of such restlessness. López created a portable studio and traveled through Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali on a Vespa. Each trip, which takes thirty minutes on a plane and eight hours by car, meant a week for López. During the journey he kept a travel log, gathering graphic document of what he saw. The project was possible thanks to what he calls Portable Studio #25, which includes, as the artists describes it, a motorcycle, two changes of clothes, music, a photo camera, a tripod, notebooks, and a camera lucida in contemporary version, purchased in London.

The artist says that he came across a reference to this instrument while reading David Hockney's *The Secret Knowledge*; there also was Roland Barthes' disquisition on the *camera obscura*. López interest grew by the fact that, as he explains, "the *camera lucida* doesn't require darkness, it works like a mirror and a prism. You look through a hole and can see the image superimposed on the paper on which you will draw, like a double-exposure photograph. The effect is surprising, or at least is so basic that it makes us wonder about this digital age, when we ignore how things work. At first I wanted to travel using this tool; I had the romantic idea of the traveling painter, but it is a very fragile instrument, it is mounted on a tripod and needs to be still for long periods, and carrying out such maneuvers next to a Colombian highway can be rather difficult. The use of these kinds of tools in drawing is one of the questions animating my interest in the genre and its historical process."

In his log, López recorded places, objects found, the date and time of the trip. Out of that experience as a "wandering traveler" came his show *Topografía anecdótica* (2008), a narrative built on drawings, objects, and photographs from the 2,153 kilometers traveled on his Vespa. López's interest in showing us things that we often do not see, to detect what has been abandoned, to jump from the landscape to the map, from the everyday object to the peculiarity of the road or of the tiles discovered in a small village patio, operate as a salvaging of the everyday, but also as forgotten vestiges. Again, the show displayed the artist's ability to transform the simplest materials, to give testimony of his unique way of approaching things around him, making evident an interest in rescuing memories without canceling his attraction for experimenting with drawings that once again become objects.

The idea of change, of motion, was made concrete in yet another space: at Mexico City's KBK gallery, located in an old chocolate factory in what was the city's industrial zone and is now in a rapid process of transformation. Faithful to his interest in analyzing how the context in which he will act operates, López noted the importance that empty shoe boxes have for some of the locals. López thought about the relationship between the number of people living in the overcrowded city and the number of shoes it implies. From here came *Sleeping Box* (2007), a giant red box that reproduces in scale a shoe box, its inside transformed into a shoemaker's workshop. The idea of the portable studio is carried forward here, and now the box included a sleeping area, a chair, a white shirt hanging from the wall, and a LP vinyl record placed on the wall as a decoration. A significant portion of the space is occupied by a desk covered by the cobbler's tools, as well as the artist's everything is carefully placed and, whether it is the three-dimensional objects López builds or his drawings, impeccably made of paper. The small drawer that appears preceding the large red box foreshadows the installation's conceptual support. Like a *Matriushka* doll, the drawer contains paper boxes organized in a spiral shape, reasserting the idea that, in the end, what is being shown, what we see, regardless of size or material, is a shoe box.

The feeling of staging is reinforced, and a space of surprising theatricality is built despite the familiar nature of the objects on exhibit. Another exploration in his approach to the topic of mimesis, through the creation of those fragile paper replicas. Again, the staging of a fiction where falsity and truth operate once more, playing to create, through his narrative, of a series of representations that circulate between the drawing, the paper, the object, and end up inhabiting the entirety of the created space.

In 2008, López began to develop a book for the Puerto Rico Poli/Graphic Biennial (2009); the project is titled *Deriva* and, following on the line started with *Diario de motocicleta*, it records stage in its own process of creation. It brings together objects, bibliographical references, quotations, models, texts written by guests and by López himself: “I have been trying to define a book in its content and form for several months (...) I am interested in the book printed in space, its ideas transmitted over time; the book as anecdote that goes from mouth to mouth until it becomes a discourse. (...) I realize that I enjoy all kinds of visual languages that offer infinite readings, that transcend form and become remembrance, paradox, relationship, coincidence, anecdote.” (3)

The structure of a book may put us in mind of the idea of the rhizome; any element can act upon another, or upon the relationships that are established. But there are also the artist’s literary recollections, where referents such as Borges and

Cortázar have a significant presence. (4) There are several guests in the book, writing stories and errata lists, and an architect who helped design the module where the drawings will be installed for their exhibition. The images used to build the book were presented in a 2009 installation at MUSAC (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León), and the module whose plans appeared in the book was built using recycled wood. Again, the long and thoughtful investigation process behind the editorial project was unfurled in the museum, recounting the experiences and situations that allow López to put together a collection of personal anecdotes and share it with the viewer. Within that logic of reflection, in the prologue Mateo López invites viewers to have “the end of my drift be the beginning of theirs.” As happened with the precious ones, this installation takes us into a world where objects are painstakingly built and, despite their solidity, what populates the space is not “the objects” but their representations. Materiality is provided by draftsmanship, the paper or cardboard on which they are made; once again, the experience of the simulacrum of representation.

And the fiction in the construction of spaces will continue to operate. During an artists’ residence in São Paulo (2009), López was invited to participate in the show *Panoramas*, curated by Adriano Pedrosa. Part

of Pedrosa’s curatorial proposal involved inviting a group of young artists then also doing their residences to observe how the process of contact with Brazilian culture would influence their work. He was interested in exploring what would happen—as the artists of Brazilian Modernismo had appropriated aspects of European culture, anthropologically digested, to produce their works—if artists coming from different parts used the same resource to analyze their Brazilian experience.

Traveling through the city, Mateo López discovered one of São Paulo’s first crafts stores. It was named Hilsco. He found special kinds of drawing instruments: they sold very traditional tools, forms that connected to the past. His fascination with the store made him think of building a space based on that reference. When he went back to take photographs in order to record the features of the site, he found a notice that it was “closed for remodeling.” This unexpected circumstance didn’t stop him from making a replica of the objects based on his memory, but with one variation: he altered the original models and, working on the basis of the store’s inventory, created rulers with waves. The question came up: What would happen if that modified instrument were to be used to create architectural plans? In parallel to his work on these projects, López started to process a different investigation. Since 2007, he asked José Antonio Suárez (5) to engage him in a visual conversation via a little notebook they exchange and on which each makes drawings. The proposal involves traversing the country’s railroad network, including both those still in operation and those that no longer work. As López explains, “The exercise includes drift, encounter, and collecting, and is not recorded on a specific format or support: the process results in drawings, photographs, videos, interviews, maps, objects, models.” (6) Recalling the tradition of travelers in prior centuries, such as Humboldt, Mutis, or Agustín Codazzi, and so many others, there is one thing that connects them despite the diversity of classifying criteria: the use of drawing.





Apple, 2011. Drawing on paper, wood. 23 1/2 x 13 1/4 in. (60 x 35 x 35 cm.).



Detail.

This long-term project once again deploys the proposal of traversing the landscape and using the most diverse media in order to accomplish his goals, and López's intention of registering, building logs of what he sees and transforming the archive of objects and materials without a single support or origin into a primordial source of his creative process, remains unchanged.

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Ping-Pong, 2007 – 2010. Project of drawing mailing with José Antonio Suárez Londoño.

NOTES

(1) Interview with the artist, January 2011

(2) Ibid.

(3) Mateo López, DERIVA, Second San Juan Poli/Graphic Biennial, Latin America and the Caribbean, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, San Juan, 2009.

(4) Interview with the artist, January 2011.

(5) José Antonio Suárez (Medellín, 1955) is one of the contemporary artists best known for the quality and rigor of his work. His affinity for drawing and print-making, media he uses to create refined images that take no more than one small sheet of paper, allows him to build a complex and dissimilar world that combines the history of art, literature, and his own quotidian environment.

(6) Mateo López, Monumento Nacional, in Arte y Archivos, ERRATA 1, Gilberto Alzate Avendaño Foundation, Bogotá 2010
ArtNexus Executive Editor. Professor at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and the Universidad de los Andes.

frieze

08/01/2008

Mateo López

KBK Arte Contemporaneo

A modest Colombian shoemaker makes his way north to Mexico City some time in 2007. After wandering through the most populous city in Latin America, He finally sets up a shop, quite logically, in a big red shoebox, which stands to one side of the shoebox-like space at the KBK gallery's new location, a former chocolate factory in an industrial area undergoing rapid gentrification. (Just a few blocks away, a new branch of the Soumaya Museum, owned by the Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim, and a satellite venue for the Jumex Collection are both under development.) The shoebox is in fact a replica of Mateo Lopez' Portable Workshop #25 (2007), a fully equipped studio (including a camera lucida) that fitted on the artist's 1994 Vespa scooter, a vehicle sturdy enough to transport him over the rough roads of Latin America earlier this year, all the while making dibujitos: small or unimportant drawings of the landscapes, architectural details or handmade billboards he discovered on a journey reminiscent of those 19th-century travellers such as Baron Alexander von Humboldt or Frederic Edwin Church.

For the artist-turned-peripatetic-shoemaker this Sleeping Box (2007) is just a bit fancier than an austere camping tent: inside are a folding campbed covered with a sleeping-bag, a simple chair with left-over breakfast on it, a plain white shirt hanging from a wall, a useless LP floating next to a pillow, and a prominent desk that fills over two-thirds of the space. The desk is covered with artist' tools and old-fashioned shoemaking implements: notebooks, pens and pencils, scissors, cutting instruments, a magnifying glass, a fancy tube of French glue, a red shoebox and of course, an unfinished pair of shoes. The arrangement is impeccable: precise, theatrical, hyperreal. In fact, however, every single object in this inventory of a supposed 'crime scene' is made of paper cut-outs, carefully drawn and coloured. They find their echo in the two-dimensional drawings that replicate the same objects from different point of view and which hang in the gallery, oth inside and outside the box.

In 2006, for his first solo show at Bogota's Casas Riegner Gallery, Lopez worked for a month in front of the public, replicating ever single object in his studio on pieces of paper, one after the other. This blending of (semi-) public performance and gallery show was designed to challenge the basic idea of art as commodity: like some sort of Penelope, Lopez reproduced ever object that was sold during the exhibition in order to maintain the integrity of the overall 'model' (or facsimile) of his studio. By the end of the show there might have been drawings of two or three pairs of scissors or glue tubes in the hands of collectors, in addition to the originals remaining in his actual studio, which necessarily acquire new meanings- and changed in market value- after being re-presented so many times. But Lopez was actually selling not so much ' conceptual' objets trouves as his skill as a draughtsman and replicator. The self-consciously naive narrative of a Colombian shoemaker finding success in the complicated spiral of the current Mexican art world also addresses the very meanings of art.

On the one hand Lopez explores the issue of mimesis, which leads him to create unstable (and extremely fragile) 'three-dimensional drawings' that look as if they were reflected in a distorted mirror (there is something magical that reminds us of Lewis Carroll's displacement of objects, which undermines the idea of hyperrealism). On the other, he exposes the intimacy of the artist's studio, a space that is now being represented not in terms of the artist's imagination or compulsions but as a slap in the face of the curator who is looking for secrets to write about when actually one finds nothing but plain, simple and neat images on the flat surface of the graph paper.

The title of Lopez' *Sleeping Box* serves as a multivalent pun on the attempt to make art at a 'post-Conceptual moment'. As the Spanish saying goes, 'zapatero a tus zapatos' ('to the shoemaker, the shoes'): to each his own. In his exquisite diagrams, which attempt to explain how a skilled Colombian shoemaker came to settle in Mexico, Lopez makes drawings perfect enough for the draughtsman. He also reminds us that 'a shoebox could contain shoes', which might be understood as a comment on Gabriel Orozco's gesture at the Venice Biennale in 1993, when the leading Mexican artist of the time placed an empty shoebox in the middle of the Aperto. Orozco's *Empty Shoebox*, which did not even have a 'real' title, theatricality flattened artistic categories, challenging the very function of art. But like some rectangular set of Russian dolls, Lopez massive red shoebox is anything but empty: it holds several smaller boxes inside, each of which contains others, or contains series of drawings of other shoeboxes that serve as supports for more drawings and diagrams of boxes. Lopez thus questions the 'empty meaning' of that more famous shoebox, reciting, à la Gertrude Stein, that a shoebox is a shoebox is a shoebox.

Olivier Debroise