

SALVAJES

September 15 -- October 22

Alberto Borea • Florencia Escudero • Ricardo Gonzalez • Claudia Joskowicz
Irvin Morazan • Meyer Vaisman • Carlos Vela-Prado • Manuela Viera-Gallo

ASYA
GEISBERG
GALLERY

Curated by Guillermo Creus.

Performance by Irvin Morazan: Friday, September 30, 7 pm.

Toda Latinoamérica está sembrada con los huesos de jóvenes olvidados.

--- Roberto Bolaño, *Rómulo Gallegos Prize speech*, 1999.

Asya Geisberg Gallery is pleased to present “Salvajes”, an exhibition curated by Guillermo Creus, with Alberto Borea, Florencia Escudero, Ricardo Gonzalez, Claudia Joskowicz, Irvin Morazan, Meyer Vaisman, Carlos Vela-Prado and Manuela Viera-Gallo.

Inspired by the lyrical, political and metaphorical themes in the writing of Roberto Bolaño as well as by his imaginative virtuosity, this exhibition conceptually aligns the Chilean writer’s characters and motifs with the works of eight contemporary Latin American artists. Drawing parallels between these artists and Bolaño’s persona as a nomadic writer, “Salvajes” intends to be Latin American in its essence, and universal in its language.

The title of the exhibition, “Salvajes” (savages), refers to one of Bolaño’s most important novels, *Los Detectives Salvajes*, and to the stereotypical image of Latin Americans as the uncivilized. We are savages as a result of the long history of violence, deprivation, and exploitation that the continent has experienced since its origins, more perceptible through the recent dictatorships, and colonial, cultural and economic policies suffered right and left, north and south. “Salvajes” refers also to the perception of the role of the artist in society, regardless of their origin. The artist’s struggle against the imperative to create and the ever-gnawing and sometimes maddening demand to make art are some of Bolaño’s larger subjects.

As in much of Bolaño’s oeuvre, the works in this exhibition deal with a notion of emptiness and chaos, and indirectly reference the darkness of Latin-American youth and the wittiness that comes from their rebellious cultural history. Just as Bolaño found ways to make the political integral to his novels without ever making them into political novels, these artists, without being explicit, reference historical facts and characters and draw from personal memory to devise theories and practices which reference a general political stance, even if often these are nuances in the work’s overall concept. While many of the artists allude to their personal histories of permanent migration and cultural itinerancy, all either speak about or find inspiration in their place of “origin”.

“How do you recognize a work of art? How can it be kept apart, even if only for a moment, from its critics, commentators, its indefatigable plagiarists, its defacers and its final destiny in solitude?” Bolaño asks in an essay from the 2004 book *Entre Paréntesis*. He goes on to answer: “Simple - just translate it.” The artists in “Salvajes” bring to a New York audience a seamless translation of their Latin American origins into a universal, contemporary and experimental visual language.

-- Guillermo Creus, 2011.

Alberto Borea (born in Peru) was educated at Bard and Skowhegan, and has had solo exhibitions at Galeria Isabel Hurley and the Y Gallery. He is currently in the Museo del Barrio biennial show, *The S Files*. Awards and residencies include ISCP, Art Omi, a Pollock-Krasner Grant, and a Sculpture Space Residency.

Florencia Escudero (born in Argentina) has a BFA from SVA, and is currently completing her MFA at Yale University.

Ricardo Gonzalez was born in Mexico City and completed his MFA at New York University, with exhibitions at Apexart, Kathleen Cullen, and LaMama Gallery.

Claudia Joskowicz was born in Bolivia and has an MFA from NYU. She has had solo exhibitions at Thierry Goldberg, Museo Nacional de Arte in La Paz, Bolivia, and Momenta. She has received an AIM residency, LMCC residency, a Fullbright Scholarship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She has been included in group shows at LMAK Projects, the Sao Paolo Biennial, the Sharjah Biennial, the 10th Havana Biennial, and Socrates Sculpture Park.

Irvin Morazan was born in El Salvador. He has a BFA from SVA, and is completing his MFA at Hunter College. He is included in the current Museo del Barrio show “The S Files”. He will be performing September 30th for *Salvajes*, and will be included in Performa 11 with a performance on November 2nd.

Meyer Vaisman is an influential artist of the 1980-90s New York art scenes, and together with Ashley Bickerton, Jeff Koons, and Peter Halley known as the ‘Fantastic Four’. Born in 1960 in Venezuela to Romanian-Ukrainian Jewish parents, he brings a cross-generational aspect to this exhibition, as a pioneer Latin-American artist that reached the New York art establishment “from inside”. He has exhibited at Gavin Brown’s Enterprise, Leo Castelli, Jablonka Gallery, and Patrick Painter among others.

Manuela Viera-Gallo (born in Rome, grew up in Chile) received her BFA and MFA from the Universidad Catolica in Chile. She had a solo exhibition at the Y Gallery in 2011 and is widely exhibited in New York, South America, and Europe.

Carlos Vela-Prado (born in Guatemala) is currently completing his MFA at Yale University.

Guillermo Creus is an artist and curator, born in Argentina, raised in Brazil and based in New York. He is the founder of Fortress to Solitude, a multi-venue curatorial platform and online art space.