

José Rojas

Veins, Verses and Fixed Action Patterns

Opening reception: Thursday, May 17 from 7:00 - 9:00pm

Gaga is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by José Rojas, on view from May 17 through July 15, 2012.

The title for José Rojas' second solo show at the gallery refers to a search for new images through a recognition of the artist's Self and other archetypes. For his instinctive and automatic projection of images and personal mandalic symbols Rojas uses archaic matter as stimulus to elicit his individual fixed action patterns (FAPs). These patterns are instinctive behavior mechanisms sparked by an external environment, sign or sensory stimulus. For José, these personal dialectics are triggered by his innate and individual history with marble and water, their properties, oneiric powers and their trending in contemporary art consciousness.

In the *JR-M#Starphire* series José used muriatic acid to etch marble tops and eat away their polished surface. After exposing the stones' veins red wine was poured over to pop them out. The dyeing qualities of wine enhance even more the veins' touch and sharpen their coloration in the deeper pores of the striae, where the concentration is highest. Transparent and colorless glass is then placed on top of the marbles to act as an active drawing surface where, in constant action and throughout the duration of the exhibition, images will be extracted from vein alignments the marble sparks off in the artist's mind and then erased, leaving only the engraving of the image in the observer's memory.

The reflective stillness of solid glass meets its material opposite in *Trance Wall*. The dripping water coming from a hole in the gallery ceiling is guided through by two monofilament lines tensed with a light weight. When stretched open an apparently still glassy surface appears but, in giving it a closer look, without breathing if possible, the viewer can notice gushing and iridescent waves. This dynamic and fleeting film-form mirrors the gallery space in a sudden reflection and transforms itself into an entrancing device. The leftover water accumulates along a curving gallery wall leaving a stagnant pond with no reflections.

Hanging in the gallery space we find *Jose's Mandala 2D*, a laser engraved mandala joined by its three-dimensional self on the floor: *Jose's Mandala 3D*. Taken from a computer analysis of Christ's 2D to 3D face uncovering process in a History Channel special José's mandala is an instrument of self-immersion. Jungian theory holds that Christ as an image is the archetype of the Self which in its wholeness contains two opposite halves. Rojas' work and practice suffers and springs from these two opposites in negotiating his intentions for the sake of his impossible completeness, striving for architectural perfection and at the same time fighting its permanence and its methods. The 3D Christ model shown in the program is surrounded by standard modeling tool symbols such as pivots, planes and spots which José draws back into two dimensions and spontaneously inserts in each one his own symbolism. He then extrudes again the resulting 2D mandala into a real 3D hologram where the human model is now a representation of his Self.

The materials used in this exhibition, although hard to apprehend in their symbolic, historic and physical properties, allow them to escape concepts such as ready-made, alchemic matter or token of change. They are heavy, fragile and rich in lectures and uses through time. The show invites the observer, not the spectator, to projections of endless symbolic possibilities that live in continuous flux.

With *Veins, Verses and Fixed Action Patterns* the artist follows his analysis on the free assemblage of forms without any models, gestures or molds commenting on man's imposition on material capitalization. In this show surfaces are not hanging on the wall and are not waiting for the artist to intervene them, they're on the floor lying as some sort of device or puddle, where no image or form will be imposed on them permanently. They become an excuse to talk about creativity, ownership and originality. Their material induction from external image references elicit FAPs and provoke this new set of works. They question how someone, anyone, when confronted with these matrixes in their individual and voluntary retreat comes across these communal shapes and images. This by understanding withdrawal as a search for collective creation of meaning. The images brought up to the surface by daydreaming and popped up veins are new in a way that their usual everyday symbolic poverty is conferred a new meaning in consciousness.