

MATERIAL ART FAIR: YOUNG INTERNATIONAL CREATION AWAKENS MEXICO

A highlight of Mexico City's Art Week, the Material contemporary art fair celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. Until February 11, it is anchored in the dynamic district of Juarez in the heart of the Mexican capital and shows a sample of the young international artistic scene.

Sébastien Maschino, *The Steidz*, 9 February 2024



Sophie Barber, *Frida's birthday cake*, 2023, huile sur toile, 25.1 x 41 cm. Courtesy de l'artiste et de Chris Sharp Gallery (Los Angeles). Photo : Ruben Diaz.

Born in the 1980s and 1990s, the artists presented at Material Art Fair give the pulse of the visual trends that permeate young creation. This energy is marked by a representation of the body which explores the register of the strange, of the drama, like the wall sculptures of Federico Cantini (born in 1991) which grasp bladed weapons that are threatening and yet harmless because they are immobile. Also animated by this dark vocabulary, David Weishaar (born in 1987) chooses figurative painting to represent imagined beings at the heart of nocturnal worlds, of which we do not know whether it is desire or death which prowls at the center of the Web. Corentin Darré (born in 1996), for his part, works in favor of stories focused on otherness and human relationships which are expressed through the plastic materialization of a collective imagination: he combines the iconographic codes of the American West through photography and a cartoonish frame to reveal an ambivalent piece evoking both gay cruising and western film.

ALISON JACQUES

As its name indicates, Material Art Fair highlights works whose materiality results from various experiments. This is what Raúl Aguilar Canela (born in 1988) manifests with his textiles printed with floral still lifes, poetically blurred, which sow clues to harder, more severe underlying realities, such as a bouquet placed in a room hospital. The narrative vignette based on the tangible world is also found in the pictorial work of Sophie Barber (born in 1996): underlined by descriptive captions directly integrated into her images, the artist spoils the faithful representation of memories - collective or personal - by painting roughly, multiplying the impasto and corning the edges of his canvases, as if to draw a line under a perfect translation of past history. Materiality is also evoked through fauna and flora, reinterpreted by the reliefs of Klara Zetterholm (born in 1991), Martin Llavaneras (born in 1983) and Abigail Lucien (born in 1992); the latter hides, under a candy pink flocking and at first glance attractive, the sad capture of butterflies within a spider's web. So many artists who shake up the surrounding reality to create new visual systems.