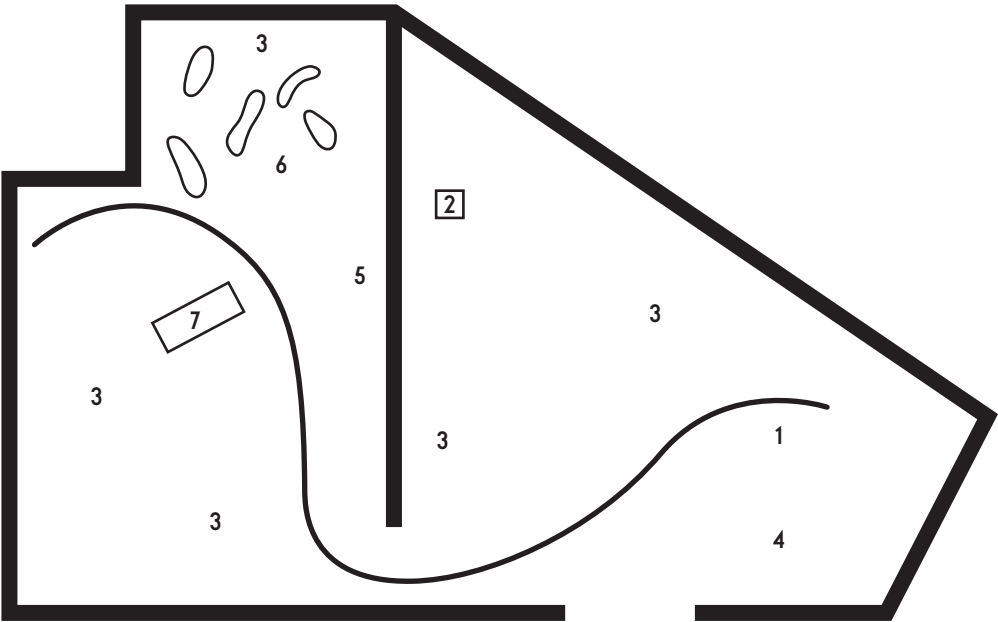


PIA CAMIL

Split Wall

14 Jul - 7 Oct 2018

Works:



Espectaculares series, 2012–ongoing

The word ‘espectacular’ is used in Mexico for billboards. In Spanish, it also refers to something spectacular. Camil initiated this series in 2012. It has evolved from one-to-one scale fabric reproductions of abandoned billboards in Mexico City. These were initially presented as stretched paintings and later as wall-mounted drapes. In 2014, Camil developed a curtain, which was used as a backdrop for a choreographed exhibition in Mexico City. The show included ceramics as props and the work *Túnica para mujer* as costume for a one-time performance scripted by writer Gabriela Jauregui, who has written the script for Camil’s new video.

For this series, Camil was influenced by French theorist Guy Debord’s concept of spectacle, which considers modern society to be ruled by mass media; with people as passive subjects, having become characters in the media’s show.

Here, one of the *Espectaculares* ceramics is also presented as a prop in the video.

Fade into Black, 2017

Fade into Black is the most recent iteration of Camil’s large-scale installations and performances using second-hand t-shirts.

Camil’s *Divisor Pirata* (2016), for example, used myriad sewn-together t-shirts, bought by the artist at the Iztapalapa market in Mexico City. Produced in Latin America for the US market, the garments were imported illegally back into Mexico. This journey highlights cross-border trade and the realities of informal economies. Camil produced a related performance in the streets of Guatemala City, which gestured towards and transformed Pape’s work from 50 years before. This performance took inspiration from the Brazilian artist Lygia Pape’s 1968 work *Divisor*, which involved a group of people marching through Rio de Janeiro wearing an enormous piece of white fabric with multiple neck holes cut into it.

At Nottingham Contemporary, *Fade into Black* takes centre stage. More than a hundred metres long, it is both curtain and architectural feature, dividing and uniting the galleries. This soft architecture comes to life when visitors interact with it by poking their head through the holes.

This work was commissioned by SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia.

Split Wall has been conceived as an immersive installation hosting new and existing works by Pia Camil. Since 2003, Camil has been developing work in response to urban spaces. The Mexico City-based artist is interested in collaboration and, in particular, the clash between informal labour and mass production. Over the years, Camil has developed a striking visual language that revisits the history of modernism using textiles, ceramics and performance. This is her first solo exhibition in the UK.

The two galleries are divided by a very large installation made out of second-hand t-shirts, titled *Fade into Black*. The space is inhabited by They, an androgynous character who is the protagonist of Camil’s new video, which was conceived in collaboration with writer Gabriela Jauregui. A series of colourful ceramic pieces punctuate the space and appear to have another life in the video.

Influenced by the German-born Mexican architect Mathias Goeritz’s notion of ‘emotional architecture’, which used colours and textures to provoke emotional responses in people, Camil transforms the galleries into semi-domestic spaces, which visitors are invited to inhabit and activate.

The exhibition is curated by Irene Aristizábal, Head of Exhibitions, and supported by Blum & Poe and Instituto de Visión.

- 1. Fade into Black, 2017**
Second-hand t-shirts
(from the market in Iztapalapa)
Courtesy of the artist
- 2. Fragmento L, 2014**
Enamel low temperature ceramic
Collection of Sebastien Peyret
- 3. Split Wall, 2018**
HD Video
Courtesy of the artist
- 4. They’s Tunic, 2018**
Nylon
Courtesy of the artist
- 5. Valparaiso Green Cloak for Three, 2016**
Stitched fabric
Courtesy of Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo
- 6. Vicky’s Blue Jeans Body Pillow, 2018**
Second-hand blue jeans
(from the market in Iztapalapa)
Courtesy of the artist
- 7. Vicky’s Blue Jeans Hammock 2, 2018**
Second-hand blue jeans
(from the market in Iztapalapa)
Courtesy of the artist
Commissioned by Nottingham Contemporary

- Bust Mask Blue, 2015**
Enameled ceramic (raku)
Collection of Catherine Petitgas
- Bust Masks (untitled III), 2016**
Enameled low temperature ceramic,
synthetic hair and brass
Courtesy of Galerie Sultana
- Bust Mask Copper and Jade, 2018**
Enameled ceramic
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Sultana
- Bust Mask Copper and Jade II, 2018**
Enameled ceramic
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Sultana
- Bust Mask Jade Matte, 2018**
Enameled ceramic
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Sultana
- Bust Mask Sigilata Black, 2018**
Enameled ceramic
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Sultana
- Bust Mask Terra Sigilata, 2018**
Enameled ceramic
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Sultana

Masks, 2015–ongoing

Camil’s masks are inspired by jewellery display stands. They recall pre-Columbian masks, which were often made for ceremonial purposes or for display. Camil produced the masks in this exhibition in collaboration with Narciso Vallejo, an expert in the raku technique of ceramic firing, in Mexico City. Vallejo uses raw minerals to create varying shades of jade, sulphur, copper, chalk and charcoal. While developing these potent and somewhat mystical objects, Camil revisited Carl Jung’s concept of persona – that is, someone’s public image or identity.

Split Wall, 2018

This is a video in five acts. It presents an androgynous character named They, who inhabits some of the works presented in the exhibition. They dances, stretches, cleans and pampers themselves. We are invited to step into their intimate space, which transforms some of Camil’s works into the character’s home, as well as their nails and dressing gown.

In the video, Camil plays with mirroring and fragmentation. The set and props in the video mirror what we see in the exhibition, confusing the boundaries between reality and fantasy, or architectural and filmic space.

Cast: **Alberto Perera**
Script: **Gabriela Jauregui**
Camera, editing, sound design and post-production: **Cristian Mazutto**
Costume: **Kristin Reger**
Set and props: **Chavis Marmol**

This video has been specially commissioned by Nottingham Contemporary for this exhibition.

Free Events

Sat 14 Jul, 2-3pm
Gallery Talk by Alberto Perera

Thu 19 Jul, 6.30-8.30pm
Contemporary Questions: Gender Identity
Panel discussion

Thu 13 Sep, 6.30–8.30pm
Architecture and the Social
Panel discussion

Exhibition Walkthroughs

Wed 19 Sep, 2pm Cédric Fauq, Assistant Curator
Wed 22 Aug, 2pm Irene Aristizábal, Head of Exhibitions and curator of Split Wall
Wed 19 Sep, 2pm Danica Maier, School of Art & Design, Nottingham Trent University