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Tania Marmolejo

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Tania Marmolejo nació en Santo Domingo, República Dominicana en 1975. De madre sueca y padre dominicano, proviene de una familia multicultural donde creció rodeada de arte y hoy día utiliza su herencia mezclada para desarrollar el talento por el dibujo, el diseño y la pintura. Luego de estudiar a finales de los 90, en Altos de Chavón, conocida como la “Ciudad de los Artistas” obtuvo la beca Bluhdorn y continuó estudios en Bellas Artes e Ilustración en Parsons The New School for Design, New York. Transcurrió una etapa de experimentación constante, combinando el arte con el diseño, la ilustración y la moda.

En el 2005 Marmolejo se integró al grupo de artistas representados por MadArts Studios en Brooklyn, NY, y District and Co. Gallery en Santo Domingo. Su obra comenzó a exponerse colectivamente en distintos sitios, nacional e internacional y paulatinamente se fue concentrando más en la pintura. Los grandes rostros femeninos se representaban sobre el lienzo como un acto rebeldía y reafirmación hacia la belleza desprejuiciada, sin “correcciones” cromáticas que colocan a la mujer dentro de una raza o estilo particular.

Desde ferias relevantes como Scope y Context Art Miami hasta bienales como la Bienal Iberoamericana de Diseño (BID), Madrid, las pinturas de Tania no pasan desapercibidas ante el visitante. Los ojos exaltados, la

mirada expresiva y los cabellos desobedientes, son un llamado de atención hacia el reconocimiento de la mujer como figura importante en la sociedad. La expresión atemporal de los rasgos faciales sugiere que no importa de dónde vinimos sino hacia dónde vamos.

Marmolejo ha sido incluida en el libro “Dominicanas fuera de serie. 150 mujeres que transformaron la República Dominicana”, de Geraldine de Santis, 2021, y es autora de los libros “I doodle therefore I am” y “To doodle or not to doodle”. Dentro de sus exhibiciones personales más recientes se encuentra “Anacaona’s Revenge” (“La venganza de Anacaona”), Eligere Gallery, Seúl, Corea del Sur, 2021. Su obra forma parte de importantes colecciones privadas y actualmente reside y trabaja en Nueva York.

Reina y su Reino

33 x 34 in (83.8 x 86.3 cm)

Fine art archival giclee print on archival cold press cotton rag 300gsm

Edición de 35

Cada serigrafía es intervenida por el artista haciendo cada copia única.



Estamos felices de anunciar la primera colaboración con la artista Tania Marmolejo

Reina y su Reino, es una edición limitada de 35. 33 x 34 in (83.8 x 86.3 cm). Fine art archival giclee print on archival cold press cotton rag 300gsm

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Reina y su Reino **– Tania Marmolejo**

By Maylin Pérez

En 1887 la escritora dominicana Salomé Ureña recitó el poema “Mi ofrenda a la Patria”, del cual destaco el siguiente fragmento:

**Y si progreso y paz e independencia
mostrar al orbe tu ambición ansía,
fuerte, como escudada en su conciencia,
de sus propios destinos soberana,
para ser del hogar lumbrera y guía
formemos la mujer dominicana.**

Viniendo de una familia multicultural: ¿Cómo fueron tus inicios como mujer artista en tu país de origen?

¡Básicamente nací sosteniendo un lápiz! Dibujaba desde muy temprana edad y conté con el apoyo de mis padres cuando se dieron cuenta de que sería una obsesión para toda la vida. Mis abuelas, suecas y dominicanas, eran artísticas, por lo que el arte estaba en la familia.

Luego de estudiar, a finales de los 90, en Altos de Chavón, conocida como la “Ciudad de los Artistas” obtuviste la beca Bluhdorn y continuaste estudios en Bellas Artes e Ilustración en Parsons The New School for Design, New York. ¿Si lo comparas con tu etapa anterior, cuáles son las diferencias que experimentaste entre Chavón y Parsons?

Chavón fue el lugar que me enseñó a perfeccionar mi arte, a entender cómo producir mejor lo que había aprendido como artista autodidacta. Fueron los 2 años más intensos de mi vida, donde viví y respiré arte. Parsons era más un lugar para hacer contactos y comprender cómo funcionaba el mundo comercial creativo.

Tu formación es multidisciplinaria y desde sus inicios incursionaste también en el diseño. ¿Cuándo y cómo fue la transición hacia la pintura?

Siempre pinté, pero también siempre amé la ilustración y el

diseño gráfico. En realidad, todo dentro del diseño: arquitectura, interiores, moda. Entonces, sentí que quería incursionar en todo y descubrí que me encantaba diseñar estampados y textiles. Trabajé durante varios años como diseñadora de estampados. Luego me di cuenta de que lo que más quería hacer era seguir pintando y exhibiendo, tenía que tomar una decisión en lugar de intentar hacerlo todo dividiendo mi tiempo. Una vez que me dediqué completamente a pintar, las cosas realmente empezaron a funcionar para mí.

La mayoría de tus obras son conocidas por los retratos femeninos con una identidad propia estremecedora y ojos expresivos. ¿Tienes algún motivo especial por el que trabajas el gran formato y cuál es el reto al que se enfrentan tus “personajes”?

No siempre pinté en gran formato. El cambio ocurrió cuando me dijeron que mi arte era "demasiado femenino" y que tal vez necesitaba cambiarlo. Así que lo hice. Exploté las caras y las hice enormes como protesta. Poco sabía que de repente llamarían la atención de todos. El desafío al que me enfrento es mantener las expresiones ambiguas e interesantes. No me interesan las caras "bonitas", me gustaría que fueran un poco extrañas e inquietantes.

El proceso: ¿Cómo describirías un día de trabajo en tu estudio?

Soy muy disciplinada, así que comienzo a pintar alrededor de las 8 o 9 am. Ya sea iniciando una pintura nueva o terminando una antigua, siempre estoy creando y experimentando.

Anteriormente mencionaba que provienes de una familia multicultural al ser hija de madre sueca, padre dominicano y residir desde hace varios años en Nueva York. ¿Cómo influye esto en tu obra al tener una visión expandida de la humanidad?

Influye en mi trabajo porque no hay un "color correcto", no hay "tono de piel correcto", no hay "características correctas".

Soy de mente muy abierta y amo a la humanidad en su conjunto, son sus diferencias las que amo. Me gusta "mezclar" funciones y características y crear mis propios personajes que no parecen pertenecer a ningún "tipo" en particular.

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Durante la crisis prolongada por el Coronavirus, el arte ha demostrado su importancia en la sociedad actual y ha habido un despertar por coleccionar más obras emergentes. ¿Crees que las mujeres artistas han ganado más visibilidad?

Sí lo creo y soy una prueba viviente de ello. Nunca había visto tantas exposiciones que presentaran a mujeres artistas como durante y después de la pandemia, y nunca me habían invitado a exhibir en tantas galerías. Ha habido un despertar. La gente quiere ver honestidad, variedad, novedad y nuevos puntos de vista.

Con más de 20 mil seguidores en Instagram muchas personas acceden a tu obra con motivos diversos. ¿Consideras que las redes sociales son una buena vía también para promover artistas?

Me encanta Instagram. Ha sido muy bueno para mí y para mi carrera como artista. Para los artistas, la visibilidad es muy importante y las redes sociales lo son. Estoy agradecida.

Has sido invitada a colaborar con Multiplo en el lanzamiento de una exclusiva serigrafía de la obra “Reina y su reino”, 2021. ¿Cuáles son tus expectativas con este nuevo proyecto?

Estoy muy emocionada de mostrar mi trabajo a una audiencia que tal vez aún no está familiarizada con el mismo. El precio diferente de una obra / regalo impreso es una excelente manera de incentivar el interés de las personas en coleccionar, algo que de otra manera tal vez no podrían hacerlo. El arte debe ser democrático, es un cambio de vida tener arte a tu alrededor y esta es una gran oportunidad para tener esa experiencia como nuevo coleccionista. También me encanta la idea de tener un proyecto en América Latina, pero que sea accesible para

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TANIA MARMOLEJO



Prensa

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Lyle O. Reitzel Gallery presents a new Solo Show by Dominican artist living in New York, Tania Marmolejo (b. 1975), with the name “Here Versus There”. The opening will take place Friday, April 13th, 2018, in the Gallery located in New York.

This exhibition; ‘Here Versus There’, displays an exquisite collection of recent drawings and paintings by Tania Marmolejo. Influenced by her mixed heritage, this body of works is heavily inspired by her Swedish and Dominican upbringing. The large-scale ambiguous female facial expressions in her paintings explore issues of gender and her identity as a Scandinavian Caribbean female artist.

“I believe in the middle ground. Not the tame, ‘I give up’ middle ground, but the tense, uncomfortable point that provokes reflection and thought when confronted with opposing ideas, emotions, and forces. In Here Versus There, I search for that ambiguous middle point between opposing forces in myself and communicate them with the viewer, hoping to provoke, in turn, a mirrored feeling. The minimalist drawings which are the beginnings of my painting process may become a spider’s web of complicated storytelling of opposing thoughts or may become an ambiguous, anxious expression in a painted character eager to tell her story but not certain that she should. In the center (or end) of it all, are landscapes that still do not manage to escape the opposing forces, trying to be peaceful and yet anxiously narrative themselves, caught between an eternal Here Versus There.” – Tania Marmolejo

Tania Marmolejo studied Fine Arts, Graphic Design and Illustration in Norway, the Altos de Chavón School of Design (La Romana, Dominican Republic) and Parsons, The New School for Design (New York). She has participated alongside Lyle O. Reitzel Gallery in PINTA New York, The Modern & Contemporary Latinamerican Art Fair in its 2011 and 2010 editions, as well as Context Art Miami 2012 during Art Basel. Marmolejo has also been part of collective shows such as “The Vagina Monologues” at Columbia Presbyterian (New York), “HYBRIDS: Dominican Art” at Queens Museum of Art (New York) and various editions of the Ibero-American Art Salon at Katzen Art Center (Washington DC).



What are you hoping to achieve in these representations of female portraiture?

With my paintings, I hope to achieve a certain communication between myself and the viewer- a curious new emotion, a “wink-wink” recognition of an experience, a pause in trying to determine a certain ambivalent expression that will guide them through the experience of being “female”, that I am narrating.

How did you begin constructing these faces? What is your process as an artist?

The faces began as an outlet to emotions, that became characters in themselves, portrayed quite close-up in my paintings. I am now stepping back from the close-ups allowing more of the environment to peek through, creating a more narrative approach, sometimes adding more characters as a snapshot of a scene based on my emotions.

What artists have inspired you and your work?

I’ve always been inspired by the raw emotion of the German Expressionists, the compositions and technique of Renaissance paintings, American and Scandinavian Folk art’s use of color and compositions, and other collective movements more than artists themselves. There is too much I am inspired by that one artist couldn’t possibly capture it all.

How have you found inspiration recently and during quarantine?

I had been “stuck” in the Dominican Republic during quarantine and found a lot of inspiration in the environment there. I painted a collection “In The Time Of Isolation”, inspired by those emotions and anxieties while in quarantine. Now that I am back in NY, and there is more optimism with the development of vaccines, I find I am painting thinking more of the future, and there is a lightness and slight comedy in the newer paintings.

How do you see your other artistic ventures like graphic, textile, and character design merging with or informing your painting?

The character design is very present, it is the strongest “arm” that decides the outcome of my art. I enjoy painting characters and faces. The textile and graphic design show themselves in some compositions, decisive use of color and repetition of elements.

How has your painting progressed through the years?

I began painting more expressively, (loose, dripping paint, abstraction of backgrounds) and now the paintings are more decided, with tighter compositions and finishes- that come from-I believe- my intention of creating a clear narrative in the painting.

Having lived in so many different places, how do you find they influence your art

The Dominican Republic, where I grew up, definitely influenced a fearlessness in applying bold colors. Scandinavia, my other heritage-influenced a more subtle palette, with secondary, cooler tones that I experienced in Sweden and Norway. The mix of the two extremes is what most determines my use of color. New York exposed me to boldness and the importance of having your individual language. My language is the mix between my two heritages- sometimes more of a tug of war than a symbiosis.

07/06/2022

North by Southwest: Tania Marmolejo Andersson's Global Folk Art

JUXTAPOZ
Art & Culture



New York-based artist Tania Marmolejo, fashion illustrator, commercial artist, author and painter, is a creative jack of all trades. Her Dominican and Scandinavian ancestry germinates a unique heritage that births a bold and arresting fine art style. On the eve of her solo show at GR Gallery in NYC opening June 10, 2022, Juxtapoz sat down with Tania to discuss how such a lineage influences her work, how movement plays into the practice, as well as some current artists on her radar.

Evan Pricco: Do you remember the first piece of art that moved you?

Tania Marmolejo: I believe it must have been paintings by my maternal grandmother in Sweden. She passed away before I was born, but her art—paintings and drawings—were amazing and always captivated me. I would sit and study them for hours in my grandfather's house and my own. I now have her sketchbook, which is my most prized possession, and I still love looking through it. Her drawings definitely were the biggest influence on my own drawing and painting as I grew up. Both my grandmothers were artistic, but my maternal grandmother had the doodles and cartoonish style that were more my taste. I have always felt connected to her through my art.

You have both Dominican and Scandinavian lineage, and I wonder what you have gleaned from each of their artistic influences, especially because both are rich in folk art traditions. And, where do you see your ancestry converging when you paint?

I am definitely influenced by both lineages. Sometimes they present themselves separately, where a painting is definitely more “Caribbean” in color and theme, or “Scandinavian” in its moodiness and color story. The Dominican influence seeps through me in bright colors, especially the blues and greens of the mountains and nature around where I grew up. The incredible color of the water- turquoise, and sometimes a darker skin tone in the character. The Scandinavian influence shows in a darker palette in the backgrounds, also influenced by the Swedish children's books about trolls and fairies that I grew up reading, and the blonder characters that many times are directly influenced by my mother. Sometimes in a painting I will mix the influences, and strange

color combinations and moods arise, which I really like because that's basically me: A muddy, colorful mix of influences.

What do you think is the hardest thing for an artist to explain about process? And here I am, asking you! I think what I mean is, what part of the process of making a painting, at what stage, is it just instinct?

I don't mind explaining my process! I don't like writing artist statements though, because my intentions and themes change as I work. Each artist has their own process that determines the outcome of their work, so it may be the most important part of creating. I do not sketch my works in advance, for example, as my work is completely expressionistic. I never know what the painting will actually look like in the end. I may have an idea, a certain plan, but as I paint, the expressions on the faces may start doing their own interesting thing - and I try not to force it. So many times, even if I look at a reference in the beginning, the expression, color and mood of the painting will turn out completely differently than I had initially planned. And I try to get as much of the painting done in one or two days as possible, even if I have to go slower afterwards to allow the paint to dry before making any details, since I work with oils. So it is a very quick, instinctive and purging initial process, and then it slows down a little and I really have to remember to be patient because I always want to start a new one.

Which artists are you looking at these days, and who is an influence?

I think more than artists today— though there are many I admire, I am more influenced by art movements from the past. Not in a direct sense, but more for the feeling— from Renaissance and Baroque movements for their play on light and dramatic backgrounds, to the German Expressionists and Abstract Expressionists for the pure expression in the work and experimentation with color. I look towards—backwards—to art history more than current art. I prefer museums that show human expression through the ages, more than contemporary art museums. But I do admire many artists today that do not necessarily directly influence my work, especially female artists who are breaking barriers and creating a language all their own. Cecily

Brown, Mikalene Thomas, Dana Schutz, Cindy Sherman. Julie Mehretu, Kara Walker, Claire Tabouret, Genieve Figgis, Jesse Mockrin, Lisa Yuskavage...the list goes on. So many badass women artists!

Let's talk about doodling. You paint, and yet you have two books about drawing and just plain doodling. How does that play in your daily practice?

I used to draw much more than I do today, when I worked as print a designer for several years. I missed my own drawing time so much that I would doodle any chance I got, on post-it notes and any paper I could get my hands on. That is where the Doodle books come from, compilations from those times. But today, since I draw directly on the canvas when I paint— that has taken over—and though I also like to draw ink on paper and have exhibited them several times—I definitely do it less than painting. But the initial process of my paintings is a drawing (very loose, yet still a drawing), I suppose that counts!

How did working in a more commercial art setting enhance what you do with your gallery work? I think I can see a scale and bold use of colors that must have come from commercial work.

Actually, what I learned more from working in a commercial setting is the discipline it takes to consistently create. I'm always thinking of the next "design" for my paintings, and I work very diligently, constantly. I have to actually travel and remove myself from my studio to relax and think of something else. But the scale of my works is actually a direct consequence of having been restricted to smaller sized artworks for my designs. It felt great to blow everything up in size once I got home and could work on my own art. It's also a direct consequence of being told my work was too feminine and that I should change it— and in protest I blew up the sizes of the works so you couldn't escape the femaleness. But that's a different story!

The experimental color combinations are also a consequence of working with textile designs. I try to have a surprising element of color somewhere in the painting, an accent that can tell a story or liven things up.

What was your focus for the new show at GR Gallery? What came in and out of the studio for you?

I am still working on paintings for the solo show at GR Gallery, and the desire for summertime to arrive seems to be subliminally working its way into my paintings. I had thought of painting the drama that follows me throughout my life (because it can be quite funny and I had been in a light- hearted mood), so there is some of that drama in the faces and color schemes. The title is Telenovela Life in honor of those overly dramatic Latin soap operas that were in the background at my friends' homes growing up in the Dominican Republic. But looking at the art now I realize there are a lot of beaches and summer in there too... I must want it pretty bad.

Are you the character in the work?

The characters always have a lot of me in them because they are based on emotions I have or have had, experiences that have marked me, but they aren't meant to be self-portraits. I create the alter-ego from an emotion and then set her free in the world to be herself and whomever she wants to be for the viewer. I was commenting on this with my husband, who mentioned that it was so incredible that they all had something that made them look like me, but not necessarily to each other. We came to the conclusion that they have the same mother- but different fathers. So there you go!

What's one thing you have done over the last year, either purchased or practiced, that has changed the way you work on your art?

I think the biggest thing that happened last year was Covid, and that changed a lot in my art. From basically doing nothing but paint because of the isolation, I remained very focused on the change in the art world that has suddenly brought many exhibitions and attention. I have so much work to do that it has changed my process and made me trust initial instincts more, allowing an expression to form without trying to change it—basically, to let the work flow in a quicker way, instinctively. In the past I could work on a piece for weeks, and I don't have that luxury of time anymore (though I think it's a good influence).

We have been thinking a lot about movement recently, because obviously the world was on standstill and we thought about movement in the abstract. Now the world is opening and at war and we are thinking about movement in the abstract once again. How does movement fit in your work?

That is a very interesting observation. Movement is always a part of my work, I like to express the feeling of the passing of time through a moving storm in the background, swirling clouds, ocean waves, leaves blowing, hair blowing in the wind... everything around the character is usually in movement and yet she stands still, watching you or having her moment. My work also evolves as I paint and experiment with it, so you will not easily see a "style" throughout a particular show because I allow the painting to change as I work. So, sometimes an exhibition can have several themes going, and a feeling of movement because it takes you to different places. I am quite distraught over the war in Ukraine, for example, and I can feel the characters' faces becoming more somber, even though the background isn't a war. I am not in that war, I can only be affected emotionally by what I see, and my inner self can't ignore it. The paintings always evolve with my feelings and what happens around me, and that is a constant creative force and muse.

Tania Marmolejo's solo show at GR Gallery in NYC opens June 10, 2022.

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