



Laura Owens

February 4th – May 2nd, 2020

Gaga is pleased to present Laura Owens' first exhibition in Mexico.

This exhibition adds to Owens's long exploration of the possibilities for painting, and more specifically the historied discreet object's relationship to the temporal and sited idea of exhibition making. This work was conceived when the artist visited the Gaga gallery/home in Mexico City in 2019 and witnessed the fluidity of public and private space. A door in the middle of the gallery barely separates the exhibition space, which once was a garage and library, from the house where Fernando and José, the gallery's founders, reside. The work made for this exhibition occupies both of these public and private spaces to enunciate the blur of this already existing artificial boundary.

When entering the gallery proper, the first part of this show consists of one piece, an installation that encompasses the entire gallery. The show proposes to make indistinct the defined parameters that we normally assign to mural, wallpaper and painting. Loosening these linguistic frames unbinds them from their culturally assigned social hierarchies. Here drawings and paintings are nearly camouflaged within the larger whole painting installation. The iconographic repertoire includes motifs and patterns from various eras of wallpaper design along with imagery familiar from Laura's past work and specific elements of the gallery's architecture.

The familiar Gaga white walls are covered from floor to ceiling by fifty-eight unique strips of wallpaper, which take into account each trait of the space—pipes, beams, doors and some reminders that earthquakes and time have left the architecture of the place with uneven floors, sloping walls and not one straight angle. Made using traditional painting techniques, hand stenciling, drawing, woodblock and screen printing, the entire room is made with highly saturated and carefully inventoried colors of Flashe paint.

Upon entering the gallery, we meet a reproduction of the gallery's glass cube ceiling pattern. Above this, another pattern is modulated by a subtle color gradient. Turning the corner, one finds a lattice, in which Laura's hand-painted additions appear to be framed. This lattice fades into a pattern of stripes that is also shifting in color as it repeats. Gradually the stripes are overrun by images of plants native to Mexico—corn, *montera deliciosa*, birds of paradise— before fading into a neutral gray. And from gray we move along to an intermingling of wood-block printed, geometric patterns that, in turn, give way to a pattern of raining lemons with the continuity or lack thereof typical of delirium or dreams. Then, almost as a breather, a couple of meters of solid and neutral color. Eight well-dressed rodents are hidden across the mural.

The second part of the show, in the residential area to which the public does not normally have access, includes seven unique, hand-embroidered cushions stacked on the armchairs along with 3 drawings, which are again camouflaged among the decor of the house disrupting the limits of the intimate and the private, between continuity and interruption. There are no direct cuts, only fade out and fade in.

Fernando, Pepe and Laura wish to wholeheartedly thank Alex Tuttle and Dave Berezin for their invaluable help in creating this exhibition.