

Because of the pandemic, we at The CAMP gallery wanted to find a way to still exhibit and present artists with opportunities to exhibit, within the confines of social distancing. We came up with the following - give the gallery to artists to curate and present their own exhibition without the constraints of the gallery itself. We invited Miami based, but international artists, Khotan and Beatriz Chachamovits, two artists who had never met, but shared an approach to art so close that they unknowingly fed off of one another!

Included in this project was the artists had to meet, to come up with their curatorial plan, write their statements and install their work - as they imagined it should be seen. Below is what Khotan and Beatriz had to say about their work and the exhibition they entitled: Symbiote

When speaking on the exhibition Khotan speculates: "This time has changed us in ways we can't even see yet, we will never look at ourselves as a culture in the same way. Even we artists who tend naturally towards solitary endeavors find ourselves with low fuel on interiority. My paintings and drawings, for the exhibition, were made in this collective isolation.

The works are intimate drawings and paintings that somehow embrace the irrational, the chaotic, the unknowable, the day dreaming and open ended meanings. I want them to have a double aspect running by implementing elements that seem familiar but at the same time strange.

Inspiration came while doing the works, most of which are modest in dimensions combining them with free hand paper or canvas cutouts from abstract scribbles and paintings done with my two year old daughter who celebrates the wealth of potentiality every day. The bold color palette is a celebration of her toys, cartoons and books. They are also a deep-seated appreciation for artists such as: Matisse, Paul Klee and Max Ernst. I wanted them to explode with life in the same way my daughter sings made up lyrics with rhythmic body movements. Jumping, running, twirling, skipping.

The actual moments of where interacting with my daughter turned in my moments of creation came at a time when all was quiet and I would rework them at night. Constant in my mind were questions like those of Gauguin and "Where do we come from?" "What are we?" "Where are we going?" These were persistent thoughts. I found myself, sometimes purposively using the UFO for its psychic charge symbolism, thinking about the collective desire for transformation, the need to compensate dissociations with wholeness. There's a feeling of alienation in the air now, the inability to distinguish truth from fiction in a cyber culture strung out on info- overload where context is constantly manipulated. The wrestling of consensus reality, the valuable contextualization vs open minded skepticism. And above all the lack for us to understand that every entity is interwoven with the rest of the universe.

In essence It's an invitation to wonder, to grasp what we can from infinitude, for the joy of discovery to remain fresh amid the hints and suggestions of the brush strokes and shapes.”

Beatriz, also in her new found solitude looks back on what stimulates all her art to what it has become, now, in this new way we live:

“As an environmental artist, my work has been intrinsically tied to scientific studies and research that investigates and highlights the state of the coral reef ecosystem.

Due to our recent pandemic situation and the isolation it caused, my focus as an artist has changed. Instead of emphasizing the vast array of problems corals have been facing, an imperative need to talk about the importance of being alive, healthy and happy became urgent.

The Coral Pile series is a response to those needs. It is a reflection of the state I crave to be in. To be closer to people. To be hugged by my loved ones. To be touched even by strangers. After ten years without using colors in my practice, I returned to drawings and paintings that show bright colors and vivid reef landscapes that intensely vibrate.

Making these artworks was the only thing that made me bounce back from the negative sentiments produced by isolation. This is the way I found to be productive while quarantined at home and also inducing the feelings I wanted to have. By creating life. Quarantine is and may still be hard for some time, but times of crisis are always a chance to find another, better way.”

What we at The CAMP found and learned from these two creatives is that in times such as our present day - what gets one through it is a return to innocence, not the innocence of not knowing, but a Blakeian Higher Innocence, where we are aware of the world, reality and people, but still have the ability to embrace the purest of imagination; one full of wonder, love, patience and optimism.