

# marguo

Press Release

## Chilangxs

Ángela Ferrari, Sandra Leal, Ángela Leyva, and Dennis Miranda Zamorano

4 April - 10 May 2025

Galerie Marguo, 4 rue des Minimes, 75003 Paris



Galerie Marguo is proud to present *Chilangxs*, an exhibition of four contemporary painters living in Mexico City, featuring Ángela Ferrari, Sandra Leal, Ángela Leyva, and Dennis Miranda Zamorano, on view from 4 April - 10 May 2025.

*What's in a name?*

Demonyms refer to groups of people—inhabitants, residents, or natives—defined by their connection to a specific place. These terms function as linguistic markers of origin and belonging, anchoring identity in geography. Some demonyms, particularly colloquial or slang variants like *Chilango*—entitled for those belonging to Mexico City, have complex social lives. While they may be used derisively by outsiders, they are just as often reappropriated by locals as badges of pride—gestures of defiance, self-identification, or cultural intimacy.

Yet what does it mean to belong to, or be of, a city? Can the metropolis—a bustling locus where shoulders are rubbed, ideas exchanged, and where attitudes leak and leech onto its inhabitants—be said to exert a special energetic force of its own? Do cities have souls? Describing Mexico City to André Breton, the Guatemalan writer and diplomat Luis Cardoza y Aragón once wrote: “We live in a land of convulsive beauty, the land of edible delusions...a place for the mutable, the disturbing...in short, a land of dream.”

The four artists included in this exhibition, while each shaped by individual experiences and engaged in distinct—though sometimes intersecting—conceptual and aesthetic concerns, share a visual language, like a local argot, that evokes the textured rhythms of a particular urban life—a vernacular shaped by familiar streets, tropical flora and fauna, and unexpected encounters.

In Dennis Miranda Zamorano's paintings, we glimpse bird-like silhouettes through heavily layered surfaces that echo Ángela Ferrari's smooth and surreal avian portraits. Ángela Leyva's haunting, distorted figures and Sandra Leal's tumultuous, gestural brushstrokes evoke the frenetic energy of a place where ideas, attitudes, and people collide daily. Gathered in the space of the Parisian gallery, these works exude a shared zeitgeist of brilliant color and dynamism, a certain patois. They embody the push and pull of the metropolis—tethered to a specific place and perpetually in motion; they are visual symbols of the sprawling urban palimpsest where belonging is fluid and identities are continuously negotiated.

Dennis Miranda Zamorano's layered, atmospheric paintings emerge from the language of the open-air market, drawing on the chaos and flux of urban life. In *Flor y Canto (poesía, arte y símbolo)*, dense brushstrokes and engraved marks spiral outward, resembling both tropical foliage and graffiti—an immersive thicket where memory and myth intertwine. In *Hormiga roja*, a colossal red ant rendered in luminous green and crimson appears both menacing and sacred. Zamorano's mixed-media canvases, weathered and worked through processes of abrasion and chemical dissolution, speak to cycles of accumulation and erosion, mirroring the layered textures of city life.

Ángela Leyva explores fragmentation and mutation through the delicate tension between digital technology and painterly tradition. In works like *GAN 6 - p1* and *GAN - I*, fleshy, ambiguous faces emerge from misty, gauze-like surfaces. Initially generated through AI, her figures are then transformed through oil paint into emotive, spectral portraits. Blush tones, blurred boundaries, and fractured expressions evoke a haunting intimacy—inviting viewers into a space between memory and invention, where genetic identity intersects with the uncanny possibilities of machine learning.

Sandra Leal's expressive, mixed media works channel emotional turbulence into radiant, visceral topographies. In *Furia II* and *Furia V*, tangled strokes of soft pastel and watercolour generate bursting, cascades of color. Rendered in fire-like reds, earthen yellows, and deep shadows, one form arches downward beneath a tree, its long black hair pooling into the soil, while another dissolves into a vortex of gestural lines, occupying a space between figuration and abstraction, erupting with physical force.

Ángela Ferrari's recent paintings take a surreal turn, blending ecological and mythological imagery with unsettling precision. In one painting from the collectively titled series *What about dreams in which you can't escape?*, a disjointed nude figure – or is it a plucked chicken? – sprawls across a terra cotta backdrop, its elongated limbs and feathered foot morphing into a field of peacock feathers—uncanny hybrids of body and landscape. In another, a snarling horse, its expression veering between agony and ecstasy, is surrounded by dandelion-like flora and fluttering moths. Ferrari's compositions offer a feminist reimagining of historical genre scenes, centering vulnerability and metamorphosis in place of conquest and control.

Together, these four artists present a layered visual and thematic dialogue rooted in contemporary Mexican artistic production. Through dense material processes, hybrid forms, emotional topographies, and historical inversion, their works speak to fluid identities, embodied memory, and postcolonial critique. Reflections on what it means to belong—to a city, a history, and a constantly shifting self.

## About the artists

**Ángela Ferrari** (b. 1990, Buenos Aires, Argentina) is a visual artist whose practice spans painting, textiles, and installation. Rooted in the deconstruction of classical European pictorial traditions, particularly the genre of hunting scenes, Ferrari's evocative work interrogates historical narratives of power, submission, and control. Ferrari reimagines these compositions through deliberate distortions of perspective, chromatic experimentation, and thematic inversions, complicating the relationships between predator and prey, human and animal, hunter and hunted. By engaging with this historically Western, colonial, and patriarchal genre, she disrupts its conventions, reframing it as a space for feminist and ecological inquiry.

Ángela Ferrari lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico. The artist has been presented in solo exhibitions including *Aurora* at Adhesivo Contemporary, Mexico City (2024); *Vértigo* at Angstroms, Mexico City (2024); and *Blood and Dust* at Maximilian Contemporary, San Francisco (2023). She has participated in major art fairs such as *Salón*

Acme, Material Art Fair, and FAMA, and has been awarded grants and residencies including the SOMA Educational Program, Lugar a Dudas (Cali, Colombia), and Cobertizo (Jilotepec, Mexico).

**Sandra Leal** (b. 1980, Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico) studied Visual Arts at the University of Monterrey, interspersing courses at the London Institute. She later completed a postgraduate degree in Visual Communication at the University of the Arts, London. Under the premise of the feeling and impulse that transitions from contemplation to creative action, her work explores the mediums for manipulating light and darkness on canvas or paper. In the process, she erases and marks her strokes, situating them within a buildup of layers that intermittently shifts from depth to surface and vice versa. She subverts the darkness of her background by acknowledging the chromatic situation of the line, without evident discrimination between painting, drawing, and writing, prioritizing both the spatial and organizational potency of light.

**Ángela Leyva** (b. 1987, Mexico City, Mexico) is a Mexican artist whose work explores the tension between digital technology and painterly tradition. Her practice examines the fragmentation and mutation of identity, often using artificial intelligence as a generative tool before transforming these images through oil paint. Blurring the line between human and machine, memory and invention, Leyva creates spectral, emotionally charged portraits that exist in an uncanny space of becoming. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions across Latin America and Europe, including shows in Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Spain, Italy, and Greece. In Mexico, her work has been featured in leading institutions such as Museo Rufino Tamayo, Museo de la Ciudad de México, and Museo de Arte Moderno. She has held six solo exhibitions, most recently *Limo* (2024) in London.

**Dennis Miranda Zamorano** (b. 1993, Mexico City, Mexico) lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico. A self-taught artist, the themes, subjects, and composition of Zamorano's work and approach find their origins in *El Tianguis*, an open-air Mexican market tradition that his family has participated in for generations. For Zamorano, the dynamism and ephemerality of the marketplace, with its encounters, disputes, in addition to the economy of objects, aesthetics, and desires, are analogous to the act of constructing a painting. His recent exhibitions include: *Abstraction (re)creation*, Consortium Museum (Dijon, FR 2024); *Falling Upwards*, Galerie Marguo (Paris, FR 2023); *Ongoing portraits Chapter I*, Galeria Furiosa (Mexico City, MX, 2021) and *Ongoing portraits Chapter II*, IMAGINE GALLERY (San Miguel de Allende, MX 2021); *Los Relatos del Rostro*, AppArt (Paris, 2018); *LANDSCAPE*, The Tiny Box Project (San Miguel de Allende, MX, 2017); *For Here or to Go*, WNDO space (Los Angeles, CA, 2017); *El Límite de la Risa*, IMAGINE GALLERY (San Miguel de Allende, MX 2016); and *My American Experience*, WNDO Space (Los Angeles, CA 2014).

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Ángela Ferrari  
*What about dreams in which you*, 2024  
Oil on linen  
60 x 80 cm (23 5/8 x 31 1/2 in)

Image courtesy of the artist and Galerie Marguo