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Miguel Ángel Rojas: Greed & Desire November 16 - December 20, 2018



Miguel Ángel Rojas: Greed & Desire. Installation View at Sicardi | Ayers | Bacino, 2018.

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Sicardi | Ayers | Bacino proudly presents our fourth solo exhibition for Colombian artist **Miguel Ángel Rojas**. The show includes a selection of pieces spanning his career, from his earlier work in photography during the 1970s

through his more recent drawings using coca leaves and dollar bills, all of which vascillate between the themes of greed and desire, lending the exhibition its title.

The photographs on view include those from his *Faenza* and *La esquina rosa* series. These vintage photographs of clandestine encounters between homosexual men at B-movie theaters in Bogotá and the prostitutes, transvestites, peasants, policemen, and office workers occupying the street corner below his studio were not merely documentary; they "were also imbued with his voyeuristic gaze," writes award-winning critic Ximena Gama Chirolla. Taking the photographs in the theatre "allowed him to be more than a mere spectator and take part in what was happening in those erotic spaces;" whereas, "the pictures of the street corner were the result of a more spontaneous act, in which he had to remain always alert, foreseeing and spying through his camera, hoping to capture an anonymous testimony of what was happening." The resulting images are ghostly records of the affective and physical experiences of a largely invisible community. They were "an extension of his eye's perversion; a gaze whose testimony would have made Bogotá tremble at that time."

In the 1990s, Rojas began using coca leaves as a material in response to the increasing prevalence of cocaine and violence caused by the drug trade between Colombia and the United States. *El camino corto* and *The Wedding* series pair names of famous drug users in cut pieces of coca leaves with names of famous drug dealers in cut pieces of U.S. dollar bills to comment on the relationship between Colombia and the United States through the drug trade and its violent wake. In a similar vein, *Sed* depicts two gold bricks – bronze cast and gold and mercury plated – imprinted with the word "sed," meaning thirst, and the seal of the colonial Spanish crown to reference Spain's acquisition and melting of Pre-Colombian gold artifacts for their own coins during colonization. As a socially conscious and critical artist, Rojas's body of work addresses the subject experience, identity, and politics as seen in his photography from the 1970s through his more recent works with gold leaf, coca leaves, and dollar bills.

Miguel Ángel Rojas's work is in many important collections around the world, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London and el Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá, among others. Rojas is currently participating in the 12th Shanghai Biennial, curated by Cuauhtémoc Medina, on view until March 10, 2019.

For more information, please call 713.529.1313, visit www.sicardi.com, or email William Isbell at william@sicardi.com or Annalisa Palmieri Briscoe at annalisa@sicardi.com.

View More

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