

HYPERALLERGIC

Art

10 Shows to See in Los Angeles This March

SWANA women artists, Dorothy Hood's unsung surrealism, Jennifer West's cosmological spider webs, queer Chicana borderlands, and more.



Matt Stromberg February 27, 2024



Karla Diaz, "Lucha in my room" (2022), watercolor and ink on paper, 15 x 20 inches (image courtesy 18th Street Arts Center and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles)

Just as LA celebrates its annual fair week, the pinnacle of the commercial art ecosystem, several shows across the city take a different approach, offering alternative creative visions and celebrating the abject, the margins, the forgotten. Dorian Wood turns the daily stream of injustices and inequalities into ghoulish delights, while Raul Baltazar sends up colonizers with a bit of Indigenous Mesoamerican inspiration. *Queerteñx* champions all types of borders, while *Boundless/Binding* highlights female artists from Southwest Asia and North Africa reflecting social change. Jennifer West's analog film works bring a punk, experimental edge to cinema, and a solo show of drawings by Dorothy Hood aims to restore her legacy.



Dorian Wood, "Drawing 43" (2021–23), ink on paper, 12 x 9 inches (image courtesy Monte Vista Projects and Dorian Wood)

Dorian Wood: *Caca*

For the past decade, artist and musician Dorian Wood has been making nightly ink drawings that revel in the grotesque, obscene, and outlandish as a way to cope with the traumas and violence happening around the world. Featuring a Boschian carnival of genitalia, saggy flesh, and bodily effluvia, they mix repulsiveness and whimsy in equal measure. *Caca*, Wood's first solo show in the US, features a selection of these drawings alongside a site-specific mural that spreads across a gallery wall like a multiplying virus.

Monte Vista Projects (montevistaprojects.com)

1206 Maple Avenue, Fifth Floor, Downtown, Los Angeles

Through March 10



Raul Baltazar, "Huitzilopochtli (Sun God at war with stars and moon to protect his mother Coatlicue)" (2020), acrylic on canvas, 70 x 109 inches (photo by Elon Schoenholz, courtesy Raul Baltazar)

Raul Baltazar: *Welcome to the Bunny House*

Raul Baltazar's expressive paintings draw on everything from Spanish colonization of the Americas and Aztec mythology to autobiographical scenes of his LA neighborhood, domestic life, and creative community. Embodying the persona of Tochtli, the Aztec a trickster coyote dressed as a rabbit, Baltazar uses humor, wit, and parody to challenge systems of oppression whose historical chains stretch back centuries. With a nod to Spanish Baroque art and Indigenous imagery, Baltazar's work is firmly rooted in the here and now.

Chapman University's Guggenheim Gallery (guggenheimgallery.net)

Moulton Hall, 1 University Drive, Orange, California

Through March 15



Detail of Salvador del Torre, "Siempre fui el" (2019), 189 consecutive digital photographs, archival footage of performance photographed by William Camargo (photo by Ruben Diaz, courtesy Laband Art Gallery)

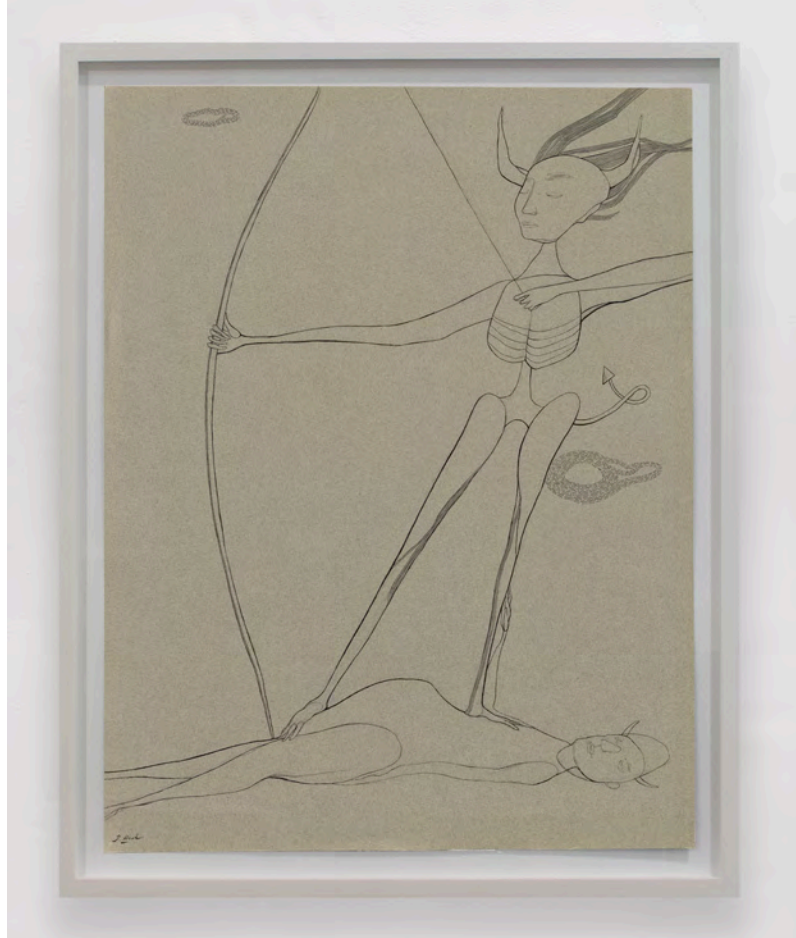
Queerteñx: Trans Fronterizes / Cuir Transnationalism

Queerteñx is a two-person exhibition featuring work by Salvador de la Torre and José Villalobos. Curated by Erika Hirugami, the show explores notions of borderlands, not just geographically between the US and Mexico but also vis-a-vis gender, queer identity, and aesthetics. ***Palenque Queerteñx***, a collaborative performance, will take place on March 2 at 6:30pm, during which the artists will engage in a metaphorical cockfight followed by a traditional Texan dance party.

Laband Art Gallery at Loyola Marymount University (cfa.lmu.edu)

1 LMU Drive, Westchester, Los Angeles

Through March 23



Dorothy Hood, "The Huntress" (date unknown), ink on paper, framed: 28 3/4 x 22 3/4 inches (photo by Evan Walsh)

Dorothy Hood: *The Huntress*

Dorothy Hood arrived in Mexico City in 1941, falling in with an avant-garde circle that included José Clemente Orozco, Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, Diego Rivera, and Rufino Tamayo. The late painter's brand of synthetic surrealism garnered attention from critics and collectors, including curator Dorothy Miller, who acquired her works for MoMA's collection. However, long-term recognition has eluded her. *The Huntress*, an exhibition of Hood's drawings curated by Paul Schimmel, aims to showcase this overlooked artist's contributions to 20th-century modernism.

Carlye Packer Gallery (carlyepacker.xyz)

2111 West Sunset Boulevard, Echo Park, Los Angeles

Through March 23



El Mac, "El Obrero" (2023), 11 color serigraph, 33 x 26 inches (courtesy the artist and Residency Art Gallery)

El Mac: *Amor Hecho Visible*

Amor Hecho Visible is a 15-year retrospective of the work of El Mac (Miles MacGregor), who began his career as a graffiti artist and muralist in the mid-1990s. His murals can now be found in cities around the world, with their recognizable photo-based style that incorporates elements of social realism with the Chicano culture he grew up around. Co-curated with the 3B Collective, this exhibition reveals the breadth of El Mac's practice, which ranges from street art to meticulously produced prints and paintings.

Residency Art Gallery (residencyart.com)

1245 South District Drive, Suite 945, Inglewood, California

Through March 30



Mays AlMoosawi, "A Living Performance" (2023), acrylic on canvas, 60 x 89 inches (image courtesy Subliminal Projects)

Boundless/Binding

Boundless/Binding is a group exhibition showcasing 15 female artists based in Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA), as well as throughout the global diaspora. Co-curated by Subliminal Projects and **Emergeast**, an online platform supporting contemporary artists from the SWANA region, the artists in the show draw on traditional themes and narratives while reflecting the historic social and cultural upheavals taking place in some parts of the region. Participating artists include Aliyah Alawadhi, Bouthayna Al Muftah, Elham Etemadi, Hana Shahnava, Maliheh Zafarnezhad, Mays AlMoosawi, Noor Abuissa, and Shirin Sahba.

Subliminal Projects (subliminalprojects.com)

1331 West Sunset Boulevard, Echo Park, Los Angeles

Through March 30



Amir Zaki, "The Collector" (2023), framed archival photograph, 60 x 48 inches, edition 1 of 2 (©Amir Zaki; image courtesy Diane Rosenstein Gallery)

Amir Zaki: *Nothing To Say*

For 25 years, Egyptian-American artist Amir Zaki has focused on the California landscape, both natural and human-made. *Nothing to Say* encompasses two bodies of work focused on roadside signs and trees in winter. Zaki digitally removes imagery and text from the signs, subverting their function to center their purely formal qualities. In an obverse manner, his photographs of solitary trees floating against cloud-filled skies highlight the lyrical qualities of branches and leaves, imbuing them with a sense of narrative poetry.

Diane Rosenstein Gallery (dianeroseinstein.com)
831 North Highland Avenue, Hollywood, Los Angeles
Through March 30



John McCracken near his studio in New Mexico in 1996 (© The Estate of John McCracken; image courtesy the Estate of John McCracken and David Zwirner)

John McCracken

John McCracken and other adherents of the Light and Space movement built off the cold minimalism of their New York peers, using space-age industrial materials to suffuse their works with bright colors and West Coast light. McCracken is best known for his signature planks, which debuted in 1966, slick rectangles of fiberglass-coated plywood covered in layers of pigmented resin that lean against the wall, a bit like a dormant surfboard. This first show of his work in LA in more than 20 years will feature a selection of planks as well as groupings of eight-foot-tall columns that recall both ancient Greek architecture and futuristic monoliths.

David Zwirner (davidzwirner.com)

616 North Western Avenue, East Hollywood, Los Angeles

February 28–March 30



Still from Jennifer West, "Space Webs (35mm film negative and print painted with silk fabric dyes, Los Angeles tap water and atmospheric soot)" (2024), 35mm transferred to 4K, single channel version duration: 10:20 minutes, edition of 4 and 2AP; installation: 10-channel flatscreen televisions dusted with volcanic ash, 10 looping videos (image courtesy the artist)

Jennifer West: *Space Webs*

Media artist Jennifer West's process is defiantly analog, treating celluloid film stock as raw material that she has dragged through tar, doused in whiskey, or taped to the High Line in New York and inviting the public to leave their marks, as with *One Mile Film* (2012). *Space Webs*, her current exhibition at Gattopardo's new gallery space in Glendale, takes its inspiration from the delicate webs of the orb-weaver spider and the expansive constellations and nebulae of space. Working with arachnoid and cosmological footage painted with silk fabric dyes, she has sewn film strips into cinematic quilts, transferred images onto holographic fans, and created an installation of flat-screen monitors that spill from the wall onto the floor like a waterfall.

Gattopardo (gattopardo.la)

918 Ruberta Avenue, Glendale, California

Through April 14



Karla Diaz, "Mal Ojo (Evil Eye)" (2021), watercolor and ink on paper, 18 x 24 inches (image courtesy 18th Street Arts Center and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles)

Karla Diaz: Wait 'Til Your Mother Gets Home

For Karla Diaz, painting is not just a form of expression, but a way to reclaim her memories. After suffering a stroke in 2017, Diaz began a practice of painting every night as a way to help her retain information. The stroke also left her with insomnia, influencing the imagery that fills her paintings and reflects a surreal, liminal landscape. With a vibrant palette and crisp lines reminiscent of comic books, Diaz's paintings combine childhood recollections of Mexico and LA, domestic family scenes, pop culture, fantasy, and dreams with a focus on social justice, a crucial part of Slanguage, the community art space she co-founded with her husband, Mario Ybarra Jr., in 2002.

18th Street Arts Center (18thstreet.org)

Propeller Gallery, 3026 Airport Avenue, Santa Monica, California

Through June 22