



Opening

A Theater for the Hands

The frames of Guchi's works act as curtains to a theatrical piece that draws us in. A bench is a theater; so is a hospital, a circus—and, needless to say, a nightclub. Every space demands its own performance: waiting in line, adopting a neutral expression, dancing cumbia or pop, leaning against a bar with a drink in hand, scanning the room for a target. Spaces invite us into performance, releasing us from the burden of defining what it means to be oneself. They invite us into staging. There was a time when flip-flops belonged to the beach—but wearing them in the city now, isn't that a way of carrying sand onto asphalt? Everything is coded, and we continuously recode it in pursuit of the freedom that comes with letting go of authenticity.

Guchi's works summon a particular theatricality: one of hands in motion, of emotions transmitted through touch. Opening a treasure chest is nothing like opening a small box of medication. And opening a painting, for me, is a way of seeing what lies beyond the paint—beyond the makeup. Hands move: they reach, touch, explore, unlatch, turn, pry open wooden surfaces, hold. Above all, they must remain gentle, so as not to damage the trust Guchi places in us—his “babies.” These instructions, these blueprints embedded in the works, generate in the hands a sensation of love that travels through the dendrites of the nervous system, coursing across the body.

There are also the eyes (watch closely!) that function like hands, and hands that function like eyes. The body is set in motion, shedding other theatrical modes to become part of a larger work, rich in relief and texture. Finally, through these “paintings,” we encounter a

miniaturization of our own bodies: figures sipping coffee from cups only millimeters wide. Rooms and scenes appear Lilliputian—scaled down just beyond the small, just before the threshold of tenderness—evoking sensations of care, protection, and love.

Fernanda Laguna, Septiembre 2022

Guzmán Paz explores biographical narratives through play and fantasy. Each of his works unfolds a story with cinematic qualities on a miniature scale, staging exchanges of gazes, tensions, and unfulfilled longings among its figures. He frequently incorporates collaged elements drawn from everyday and domestic life to construct the landscapes and settings of his scenes—worlds that emerge at the intersection of personal experience and reverie.

His work gestures toward a deep affinity with painting, while also revealing an impulse to subvert it: to transform it into collage or sculpture, or to parody its latent baroque excess. Writing on the exhibition *Solo cuentos* (2017), critic Claudio Iglesias noted that “his paintings narrate his sadness and the joy of love: universal yet private feelings.”

In his early years as a painter, Paz developed an interest in elaborating the frames of his works, which soon began to take on increasing prominence. His most recent pieces function as small, softly colored devices that conceal within them other paintings—rendered in vibrant palettes and populated by characters.

In *Opening*, then, each work contains another: there is a shell, an appearance, a kind of deception. Within one work, another lies hidden. They unfold as if revealing the interiority of fantasy—a secret that engages with the most baroque traditions of painting while articulating a distinctly contemporary subjectivity.

Guzmán Paz (Montevideo, 1988)

Since 2012, he has been a member of the collective Básica TV, alongside Emilio Bianchic and Luciano Demarco. Together, they develop videos, photographs, and installations inspired by mass culture, recoded through a queer lens. Their work draws on formats such as television, advertising, sketch comedy, and the music video, consistently employing simple strategies, handmade sets, and post-production effects. In 2016, the group received the EN OBRA Prize for their presentation at Barrio Joven Chandon at arteba.

Since 2015, Paz has exhibited his work at institutions including the Museum of Modern Art of Buenos Aires (2022), Museo Larreta (2021), Para vos Norma Mía (2021), Vantage Art Projects (2021), Palais de Tokyo (2018), Fundación HSBC (2017), CCK (2017), the Bienal del Pensamiento Paralelo (2017), and the Bellos Jueves series (2015) at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, among others. He studied interior design and is a self-taught visual artist. He currently lives and works between Buenos Aires and Montevideo.

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