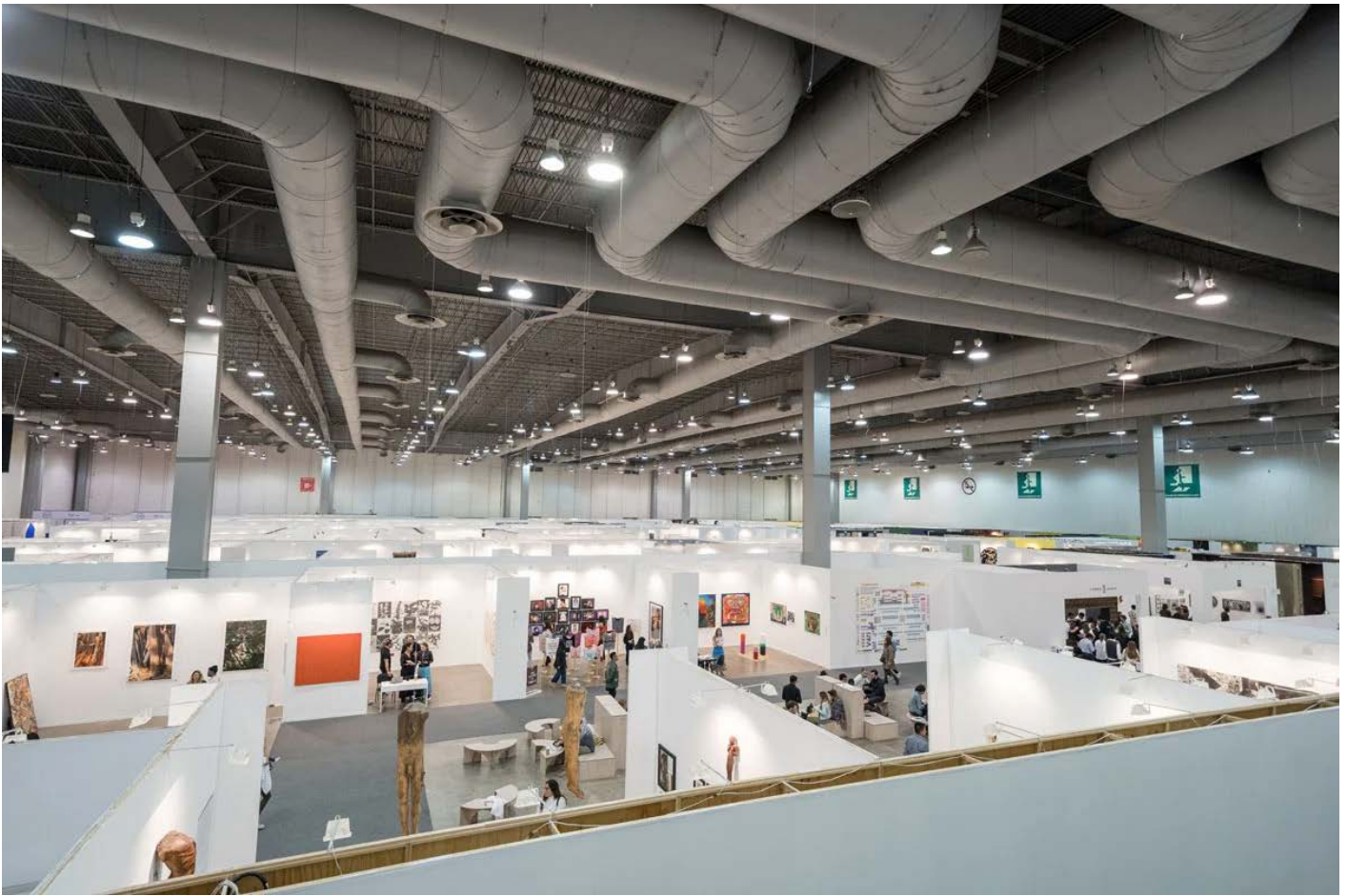


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The 10 Best Booths at Mexico's Zona Maco, with Pieces Honoring Protest and Place

BY **SHANTI ESCALANTE-DE MATTEI**

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A past edition of Zona Maco.
COURTESY ZONA MACO

Arguably Latin America's most important art fair, Zona Maco has been on hiatus as the country, and the world, weathered the pandemic, staging its last edition in February 2020. And since the pandemic is still not over, the fair made the necessary adjustments to ensure visitor safety. Aisles between booths were significantly widened, and masks were required—attendees for the most part were good about wearing them. A general sense of weariness toward international travel seemed to dampen attendance at the fair, which felt somewhat lower than years past, despite Zona Maco scheduling its date a

week before Frieze Los Angeles. (Their overlap had kept exhibitors and visitors from visiting in the past.)

[*Calendar: When is the world's next art fair?*

(<https://www.artnews.com/list/art-news/artists/art-fair-calendar-2022-1234615993/>)

After a four-year absence from the fair, mega-gallery Gagosian returned, and Deborah McLeod, a director at its Beverly Hills location, said that a lot had changed. “Zélica García [Zona Maco’s founder] has done an amazing job revamping the fair,” McLeod said. “During the pandemic hiatus, it really seems she and the fair team had time to reconsider some things. It doesn’t feel crowded or like you’re going to bump into art work. Every aisle feels like the main aisle, which is great for the exhibitors. Everything seems to be upgraded, to the lighting and the floors.”

Below, a look at the 10 best booths at the 2022 edition of Zona Maco, which runs through Sunday.

Erick Medel at Seasons LA



hanti Escalante/ARTnews

Born in Puebla, Erick Medel immigrated to the United States as a teenager. After graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2018, Medel made another big move, this time to Los Angeles, where he began working with his now signature materials: denim and an industrial sewing machine. At the booth for his gallery, Seasons LA, Medel showcased three works of embroidered denim depicting street vendors selling balloons. Medel's work often touches on the ways Mexicans "hustle and grind," according to a release, on either side of the border, honoring the work of those selling fruit from a cart, flowers from buckets, or, in the case of the Seasons LA booth, balloons of cartoon animals.

Norton Maza at YAM Gallery



Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Norton Maza's life has been shaped by the intense politics of his home country, Chile. As a child he grew up in France and later Cuba as a refugee following his family's exile as a result of his father's political convictions. Finally able to return to Chile in the late '90s, Maza's art has long examined state violence. On view courtesy of Mexico City's YAM Gallery are three small sculptural works with a huge impact. Since mass protests began in Chile in 2019, citizens took to chipping away at public infrastructure to get large

chunks of cement. Following the daily protests, Maza would collect these makeshift projectiles and take them to his studio where he began to stage dioramas of Chilean privilege. One of these cement blocks is the foundation for a tennis court, another for a luxury car collection. In these works, Maza demonstrates the luxuries that incentivized the Chilean elite to betray the needs of the country's people time and time again, stopped only by a revolution.

Fran Chang at Verve Galeria



Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Fran Chang's small, otherworldly paintings at São Paulo's Verve Galeria booth impressed with their subdued but powerful presence. Each of Chang's landscapes, always devoid of human presence and painted on silk, depict rocky plains and shores from the artist's imagination. These uncanny works often feel as if they depict another world, and it's partly because they do. After receiving a BFA from the Centro Universitário Belas Artes de São Paulo, Chang went on to study astrophysics and astronautics. The influence of celestial bodies is evident in her work, which often features a moon, sometimes several moons. A young artist, Chang has nonetheless become in high demand in Brazil after Verve Galeria debuted her work at Brazilian fairs and museums. One of her works is already held in Rio Art Museum's collection.

Guadalupe Maravilla at P.P.O.W.



Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

In the booth for New York's P.P.O.W., Guadalupe Maravilla's works shine, for how they mix Latin American cultural traditions with an increasingly recognizable New York City aesthetic, where he is now based. Each of the four works are mounted on plywood and ensconced by specially made frames that resemble bones and gothic candles. Two of the works on view at the booth are sculptural, crafted from found objects, primarily sea shells. The other two works are paintings that take as inspiration a classic Latin American offering to the Virgen de Guadalupe. In these traditional paintings, an individual will thank the Virgen for her help and paint the scene in which they believe the Virgen intervened. Maravilla's take don't hold the same religious connotations but do focus on gratitude.

Iuilan Bisericararu at Anca Poterasu Gallery





Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Iulian Biseriaru is a Romanian artist whose academic interest in architecture and ecology has informed the content of his paintings. Presented by the Bucharest-based gallery Anca Poterasu, Biseriaru's series of paintings take inspiration from a recent water crisis in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In 2020, ranchers and other residents of Chihuahua occupied La Boquilla Dam, situated on the Rio Conchos, a tributary of the Rio Grande, after the government announced that the dam would be all but drained to pay back a water debt to the United States in the midst of a period of intense drought in the area. While Biseriaru's paintings leave out the human subject, the infrastructure of the dam and the pollution it creates are Biseriaru's focus as someone fascinated with the material foundations of the present ecological collapse.

Pedro Friedeberg at Maia Contemporary





Photo : Shanti Esclante/ARTnews

The iconic Mexican artist Pedro Friedeberg is having a major comeback. Well known during the 1960s and '70s, Friedeberg faded from view in the intervening years, but he has slowly been regaining relevance. On view at Maia Contemporary is a booth filled with, yes, some of his well-known hand chairs, accompanied by his lesser-known paintings. The works on view stun with a computer-like precision and flatness while offering a trippy, surrealist vibe.

Juliana Góngora at Espacio Continuo



Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Juliana Góngora's booth at Bogota's Espacio Continuo displays sculptural works from her recent series "Arrullos" (Spanish for lullabies). The works, made in collaboration with the Indigenous Coreguaje/Ko'revaju people, focus on the relationship between nature and motherhood infused by Góngora's personal sentiments on the subjects. Entering the booth on right is a series of wall-mounted glass sculptures in the shape of a bowl, which drop by drop feed water to the plants below. Next is a series of shallow bowls made using a traditional technique that molds milk and lime into a solid

receptacle. On the left wall is a collection of objects: samples of clay, milk dried on a sieve, various plants, as well as some examples of an Indigenous building material technique. This collection represents Góngora's research practice but also her deep engagement and respect for the community. In the center of the booth is a large sculpture from which hands woven sacks, a technique the Coreguaje/Ko'revaju say they learned from birds who weave their nests in the forest.

Moris and Tamara Arroyo at NF/ Nieves Fernández



Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Moris and Tamara Arroyo both make work that pays close attention to their surrounding environment in sensitive ways, on view at the fair courtesy Madrid's NF/ Nieves Fernández gallery. Tamara's sculptural works of plastic bags and street posts make solid the daily architecture of her native Madrid. Moris, an enigmatic artist, takes a more forensic tack with his paintings that grows out of a lifelong interest in doing research about Madrid. In one work, he places the yellow numbered placards, often placed in crime scenes, in a polluted city river. In two of his paintings, found objects are attached to the bottom of his canvases like some kind of odd evidence.

Amor Muñoz at Colector



Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Amor Muñoz's tech-focused works shine with a sleek, well-produced futurality. On view via Colector gallery, from Monterrey, Mexico, were three works by Muñoz, all sculptural. A centerpiece was *Hybrida 0.2 (Data-Carbono)*, from 2021, in which a glass sack holds burping microbes whose gases inflate a plastic container in a repetitive, breathy motion. The rest of the booth was filled with works by Zhivago Duncan, Rachel Garraro, Jorge Usan, Max Frisinger, Slater Bradley, and Aldo Chaparro Winder. Colector managed to be one of the few booths to bring together so many artists in a truly harmonious, complimentary manner.

Pascale Marthine Tayou at Galleria Continua

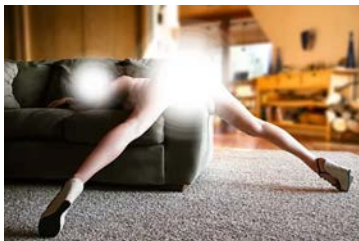




Photo : Shanti Escalante/ARTnews

Pascale Marthine Tayou's work on view at Galleria Continua's booth draw on his Cameroonian heritage, using found objects to stitch together a modern interpretation of the symbols and domestic comforts of Yaoundé, the country's capital, with his signature sense of humor. On one wall are his series of "Bantu Blankets," where faces, animals, masks, and abstract shapes are stitched together onto threadbare towels. On a nearby stand are a series of sculptures, which he calls dolls, made of blown glass and found objects.

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