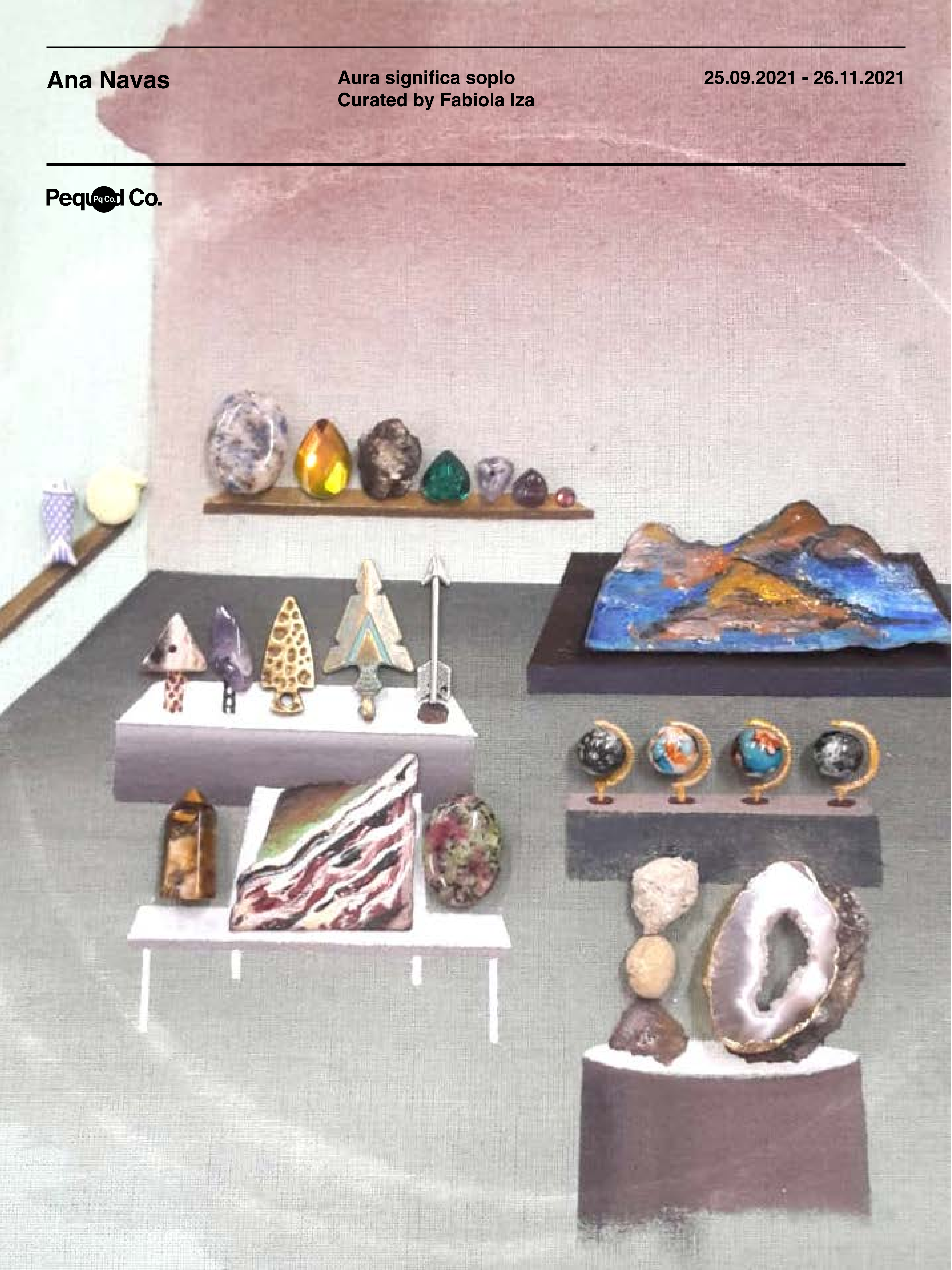


Ana Navas

Aura significa soplo
Curated by Fabiola Iza

25.09.2021 - 26.11.2021

Pequeño Co.





Pequod Co. is pleased to present Ana Navas' solo show, *Aura significa soplo*, curated by Fabiola Iza, at its pop-up location: Laguna (Dr. Erazo 172).

During the past few years, Ana Navas' artistic output has inquired on the multiple interpretations, appropriations, readings and iterations that Modern Art has undergone in the fields of design, fashion, and marketing, among others, and its insertions into the realm of everyday life. Using different production strategies such as translation, appropriation and copying, her work explores the various processes of circulation in which objects and ideologies are inscribed – mainly, what happens in these transits in the manner of Chinese whispers. *Aura significa soplo*, an idea that can be rendered in English as «Aura is air in motion,» is Navas' first solo show at Pequod Co; it brings together four recent series that unfold along a museographic adaptation conceived as a set, and over an oblong painting, specifically made for the exhibition space. The common thread weaving together the more than twenty exhibits is a playful and ironic inquiry on how different systems and groupings for ordering the world come into being.

Transparencies, 2020-2021, addresses similar categorizations with an imperial/colonial gaze. It arises from the artist's interest in the narratives spurred from ethnographic objects and how they are displayed. The series takes photographic records of displays from now-disappeared museums –for example, the Musée de l'Homme and the Musée Ethnographique du Trocadéro in Paris– where objects deemed «exotic» were sheltered in vitrines, following museum models with a scientific approach. These mise-en-scènes, a visual language that constrains the objects within a specific ideology, are meticulously disarticulated by the artist: She deconstructs the photographs into layers and depicts each one of them in translucent fabrics placed over metallic racks and rods. Although these ways of representing the world are now defunct –or have simply been replaced by new trends–, is it possible to proclaim the extinction of such gaze?

If *Transparencies* approaches abstract constructions as containers of ideological frameworks, the series *Patterns*, 2020-2021, and *Dress-Ups*, also 2020-2021, evoke an avowed material interest in the different containers that bear the imprint, even if diluted, of the forms of Modern Art. Navas replicates the volumes of a democratic selection of objects –plastic bottles, ergonomic mops, baby seats, busts and sculptures– and translates them into cloths that act as a second skin. These pieces are made of industrial textiles that imitate manual gestures (the drawing of a line, an artist's signature, a brush's dripping) and fabrics on which the artist has captured, manually, that very same gesture and transformed it into a pattern. Thus, for example, by reproducing by hand an Ikea beds-

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heet with a *Shibori* print, a Japanese artisanal technique to create patterns by dyeing fabrics, Navas restores in the copy –something of lesser value or a mere imitation from a Western logic– the original state and the vigor of the manual quality. As a result, the objects are inserted into a circular cycle: Departing from their industrial nature, they are reintroduced into the field of art.

Like a kind of expanded painting, the works from *Patterns* are displayed on the wall, unfolding a three-dimensional shape into a flat surface. The artworks create contours as unexpected as evocative, and while mimicking the Rorschach test, their titles denote the figures that friends of the artist saw projected onto them. *Dress-Ups* employs the same fabrics and figures from *Patterns* as a covering of curved and organic volumes that dialogue with the language of sculpture and showcase a domesticated version of its modern forms. Here, Navas is interested in what presently constitutes the very notion of «sculpture» or, in other words, the features that an object should possess to be considered as such. The selection of objects mentioned before is proposed within this artistic field, taking its cue from the visual repetitions of its silhouettes.

Footnote, the linoleum painting, encompasses the dissimilar references that inform the artist's idea of «sculpture» and inspire her quest for finding the stranged artistic ancestors of everyday objects like household appliances, medical instruments, kitchen accessories, and mechanisms like doorknobs, among others. Moreover, this visual research draws links among already outdated binary categories like fine arts/applied arts, equally including their «bastard objects» crafted in the practice of design. To abolish these borders has allowed the artist to create new families of objects, grouped together, in this case, for being the residual products of an artistic movement: Their domesticated versions.

Lastly, the series *Plates*, 2019-ongoing, summarizes the interests expressed within the other series. Alluding to the idea of collecting souvenir plates, the series employs as a material basis a wide variety of these food vessels (mostly with dividers) where the artist crafts miniature scenes from spaces that inspire her. A hipster cafe, a glass shop, a sculpture garden, or a «natural history» museum are conjured by employing small props, jewelry elements, buckles, and other materials used to produce decorative objects. With them, Navas portrays spaces where forms of ordering and exhibiting objects become apparent, responding to the over-aestheticization of daily life. These miniature scenes manifest the circulation and transformation of the aesthetics of the twentieth-century avant-garde and neo-avant-garde art movements.



In *Aura significa soplo*, Ana Navas carries out different acts of material dissection –she flattens down forms, disassembles showcases, decomposes images into multiple planes, and tears up props– yet she incurs in more complex operations: She shreds meanings and the consensus behind things (either the colonial approach of a museum or the spatial logic of a tourist shop) by peeling them down. It is through these dissections –which can be understood as movements: transits, circulation, paths– that she carries out an attack against the original forms of an object. This causes them to disappear and reveal their «aura,» that which enveloped them: imaginaries and archetypes such as what is modern, good taste, elegance, the civilized and the primitive, among many others, lurking behind these objects. In Latin, «aura» means wind, breeze, blow, and, in Greek, it is related to the same verb, to blow. It is thanks to those subtle, soft and vaporous movements –like the murmur of a heart, a breath that little by little disarms an object– that such immaterial concepts are carefully re-signified through materiality.

Production team: Ida-Simone Brerup, Berke Gold, Paloma Gómez Puente and Diana Mariani.

The artworks on display at this show were made at Fondation Fiminco's (Paris) workshops thanks to the support of Mondriaan Fonds.