

belvedere

DONNA HUANCA. PIEDRA QUEMADA

Lower Belvedere

28 September 2018 to 6 January 2019



Exhibition View Donna Huanca. Piedra Quemada, Photo: Johannes Stoll © Belvedere, Vienna

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The Belvedere invites emerging artist Donna Huanca to create a multisensory cosmos of sculpture, painting, video works, sound, and olfactory elements, including live performances within the historic rooms of the building. The Bolivian-American artist's work leads visitors from artificial light to darkness.

In the former private chambers of Prince Eugene of Savoy, Donna Huanca's mise en scène juxtaposes the self-asserted display of male power and virility with a female universe. The Baroque palace will become the setting for a journey from light to dark, symbolizing the movement from superficial perception to insight and understanding.

Stella Rollig, CEO of the Belvedere and curator of the exhibition, explains her motivation in presenting the innovative project: *'We see the Belvedere's reputation and attraction as a mandate to showcase experimental artists at the beginning of their career. It is precisely the ephemeral in Donna Huanca's work, the volatile, that I wanted to place in a stimulating contrast with the historic building. During these times, when performance elements are of great importance in visual arts, Huanca is not only relevant but radical and as pioneering as Tino Sehgal was in the noughties.'*

Models, whose bodies are adorned with colour and textile elements, move, much like tableaux vivants, engrossed and meditative through the exhibition space. They are confronted with historical counterparts in the form of life-sized, white female sculptures. The meditative character of the multisensory scenes is emphasized by a soundscape. The ephemeral

atmosphere of the performance is in direct dialogue with the paintings and sculptures, which are a fixed part of the exhibition. This juxtaposition of classical sculpture and live performance generates a field of tension between stasis and flux, past and present. The traces of colour left behind on the walls by the models make time visible and ensure a continuous transformation of the space.

'Space is transience that can be activated. This is where I see the meaning of the models: they are mediators of a fleeting process in which space is morphed and developed. For the duration of the exhibition, the models exist as a breathing system that revolves around temporality and deconstruction. They scar the space and then leave the environment changed', says Donna Huanca.

Models as 'original paintings': The artist designates her models as 'original paintings'. She generates photographs of them, transfers those to canvas, and subsequently reworks them with paint. In the process, she revisits those colours and forms she had previously painted onto the nude bodies of the performers, thus creating a literal connection between image and performer. The human body is a recurring element in her sculptural and assemblage works. In her choice of materials, such as velvet, latex, or leather, Huanca refers to the transience of physical existence. Her video works draw attention to the human skin as a multilayered surface through which we experience the world. The close-up fusion of model, colour, and materials create moving images.

The exhibition title *Piedra Quemada*, loosely translated as 'burning or burnt stone', refers to Huanca's examination of her Bolivian heritage and ways of seeing the world from a perspective of the Incas. The contradictory combination of the terms '*pedra*' and '*quemada*' addresses the duality that permeates the entire exhibition concept: light versus darkness, ignorance versus

wisdom, youth versus old age. These are important aspects of her work, which can also be found in the frescoes of the Belvedere. For instance, scenes and motifs of transition and transformation can be detected in both Huanca's works and in the rooms of the former summer residence. Huanca references the building in many ways in this work: Beginning from the Marble Hall and following the peculiarities of the Baroque architecture, the artist lays out the sequence of her work to align in a mirror image of the building's architectural plan.

Born in Chicago in 1980, Donna Huanca studied painting at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine, and at the University of Houston in Texas. *Piedra Quemada* is Donna Huanca's first major solo show in Austria. She has had previous museum exhibitions, for instance, in 2016 at the Zabudowicz Collection in London and in 2018 at the Yuz Museum in Shanghai. The artist lives and works in Berlin. Her multidisciplinary approach connects elements from music, performance, and painting and circles around the themes of femininity and gender identity and related stereotypes and prejudices. Preoccupation with the human body—its presence in space as well as its use as a material and medium of art—is a central feature of Huanca's multidisciplinary works, while elements such as wall rubbings and body painting reference her Bolivian roots, another recurring motif of her works.

'What I particularly like about my works is the experience of the performance, this moment when you don't yet know where the boundaries lie, where everything will take place, whether you can get close to the performers or not. I like this unpleasant tension that arises from the situation of the live event.' – Donna Huanca

#donnahuanca

ARTISTS BIO

DONNA HUANCA

Lives and works in Berlin, DE

Education

- 2010 Städelschule, Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Frankfurt, DE
2006 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, Maine, US
2004 Bachelor of Fine Arts Painting, University of Houston, Texas, US

Current Solo Exhibition

PIEDRA QUEMADA, curated by Stella Rollig, Belvedere Museum, Vienna, AT
Donna Huanca, curated by Aukje Lepoutre Ravn, Copenhagen Contemporary, DK

Current Group Exhibitions

Breakfast at Tiffany's, Galerie Clemens Gunzer, Wädenswil, CH

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2018 *Cell Echo*, Yuz Museum, Shanghai, CN
2017 *Lengua de Bartolina Sisa*, Travesia Cuatro, Madrid, ES
2016 *Surrogate Painteen*, Peres Projects, Berlin, DE
Scar Cymbals, Zabłudowicz Collection, London, UK
2015 *Poly Styrene's Braces*, curated by Anne Barlow, Art in General, New York in collaboration with kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga, LV
Muscle Memory, Peres Projects, Berlin, DE (with Przemek Pyszczyk)
Water Scars, Chez Valentin, Paris, FR
Echo Implant, Joe Sheftel Gallery, New York City, US
2014 *Psychotria Elata*, ABC Berlin, DE
Sade Room (formerly reclusive), MoMA PS1, New York, NY
Seeing Auras, ltd, Los Angeles, US
2013 *Maenad Cymbals*, Open Forum, Berlin, DE
Scrying Threats, Queer Thoughts, New York, NY
CRUSHING (hard), Access Gallery, Vancouver, CA
2012 *Panic Fear Crying Fits*, Preteen Gallery, Mexico City, MX
The Myth... CCS Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, US
Unearthing, Various Locations, Peru

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2018** *I Am Large, I Contain Multitudes*, Galerie Wedding - Raum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Berlin, DE
Monarchs: Inheritance, Migrations and Sovereignty in Native and Brown Contemporary Art, curated by Risa Puleo, Blue Star Art Space, Texas, US; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, US; The Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, US; The Soap Factory, Minneapolis, US
What's Up: Forms of Abstraction, curated by Lawrence Van Hagen, Pedder Building, Hong Kong, CN
Amyruca Entheogen, Arsenic - Contemporary Arts Center, Lausanne, CH
- 2017** *The Second Self*, Peres Projects, Berlin, DE
Jaguars and Electric Eels, Julia Stoschek Collection, Berlin, DE
Brief Encounters '17, curated by Chris Driessen, Fundament Foundation, Tilburg, NL
Dialogues, curated by Dr. Barbara Jenner and Dr. Jenni Fulton, Verband der Automobilindustrie, Berlin, DE
Io sono qui, curated by Lorenzo Bruni, Museo D'Arte Contemporanea Roma (MACRO), Rome, IT
Monarchs: Inheritance, Migrations and Sovereignty in Native and Brown Contemporary Art, curated by Risa Puleo, Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Nebraska, US
- 2016** *Streams of Warm Impermanence*, David Roberts Art Foundation, London, UK
On the Verge of an Image: Considering Marjorie Keller, The Gamble House, Pasadena, US
Ice Chrysocola, Cabaret der Künstler - Zunfthaus Voltaire, Manifesta 11, Zurich, CH
Wild Style: Exhibition of Figurative Art, Peres Projects, Berlin, DE
FACE TO FACE: Works from Ernesto Esposito Collection, curated by Eugenio Viola, Palazzo Fruscione, Salerno, IT
- 2015** *Performative Practice*, Halsey McKay, East Hampton, New York, US
Volumes, Berthold Pott, Colonge, DE
Rainbow, Queer Thoughts, Various Outdoor Spaces, NI
- 2014** *To The Happy Few*, JeanRoch Dard, Paris, FR
- 2013** *Elevation*, Arnhem Fashion Biennale, Arnhem, NL
D, ZweiDrei, Berlin, DE
Pioneer Voices, Gallery of Northern Norway, Harstad, NO
Raw Material, Malmö Konsthalle, SE

- Braids*, Access Gallery, Vancouver, CA
Social Fabric, CAFAM, Los Angeles, CA
2012 *Reduction of Form*, EXILE, Berlin, DE
Baby I Lost my Handshoes, Fórum da Maia, Maia, PT
SADE on DMT, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, AU
Stoned Apes, Fórum da Maia, Maia, Portugal
2011 *Baby I Lost my Handshoes*, KURANT, Tromsø, NO
2010 *Conjunction*, HBC, Berlin, DE
2009 *Incehon Biennale*, Incehon Art Platform Incehon, KOR A-Z
Smockshop London, Sprüth Magers, London, UK
A-Z Smockshop: Berlin, Sprüth Magers, Berlin, DE
2008 *Etapa #2*, Network of Love (with AIDS-3D), Exit Art, New York, NY, US

Awards & Grants

- 2016 Hirshhorn Artist Honoree, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, US
 2012 Fulbright Scholarship for research in Mexico City, Washington DC, US
 2011 Art Matters Grant, New York, NY, US
 2009/10 DAAD Artist Grant, DAAD, Bonn, DE
 2008 Francis Greenberg Award, Art OMI, Omi, New York, US
 2006 Fellowship, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, Maine, US
 2004 DeGolyer Grant Recipient, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas, US

Residencies

- 2015 SmackMellon, Brooklyn, New York, US
 2013 Access Gallery, Vancouver, BC, CA
 2009 LMCC SwingSpace, 77 Water, New York, New York, US
 2008 Headlands Center for the Arts, San Francisco, California, US
 2008 Art Omi International Artist Residency, Ghent, New York, US
 2007/08 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, New York, New York, US
 2007 Lawndale Art Center, Houston, Texas, US
 2006 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, Maine, US

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition title	Donna Huanca. Piedra Quemada
Exhibition duration	28 September 2018 to 6 January 2019
Venue	Lower Belvedere
Exhibits	20 Paintings / 10 Sculptures / 2 Video Works / 1 Soundinstallation
Curator	Stella Rollig
Exhibition catalogue	Presentation on 21 November 2018 within the frames of vienna art week <i>Donna Huanca. Piedra Quemada</i> Editor: Stella Rollig Authors: Elysia Crampton, Isabelle Graw, Maike Hohn, Ana Petrović, Stella Rollig Graphic Design: Alexander Nussbaumer, Wien Verlag für moderne Kunst about 208 pages and 120 pictures 21 x 28 cm, Hardcover German & English ISBN 978-3-903114-62-3 EUR 29,-
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Regular Entry	€ 13,- (Lower Belvedere)
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