

Our nest

By Juan Ignacio Boido

A huge hornero would surely terrify us, but one of its nests, custom made for us, would just as certainly shelter us. There is no need to be a fan of those horror movies in which giant spiders chase terrified humans to know that life is not a matter of size but rather of scale. For as in that disproportion terror nests, so beats in it the secret harmony of the universe. Or does it not amaze us that an atom with its nucleus and its hula-hoop of protons, neutrons and electrons, is equal to our solar system, with its sun and its hula-hoop of planets? Or does it not amaze us that a whole life can fit in the line that runs through the palm of a hand? That way -universal as that harmony found in the microscope and the telescope, handcrafted as those hair and latex gargantuan monsters that taught us that certain disagreements are horror, allegorical like the palm of the hand, and real as a hornero nest- Catalina León's hornero nest gives us the opportunity to experience some of what we are in general scarcely astonished witnesses.

The hornero builds its nest every rainy season for its offspring. A nest shaped as an igloo, shaped as a tent. Tracey Emin, in the '90s, presented her love tent. Tracey Emin was one of the new angry young men of British art. Catalina León is not just from another generation but also from another country: of the hungry young men of Argentina: a generation that saw the hunger, the collapse, the cartoneo (waste picking), the debris. Hence one's nylon and the other's mud.

It is fair, even, that Catalina León's hornero nest is unfinished: the complete experience is to build it, not to buy it done. If not, we would be like those animals that use horneros' abandoned nests after the rains: mice, rats, at the best birds that live on other's nests. The nest of Catalina León allows us to stand there in the middle of our possibilities: to build our own place. The hornero does it this way, she says. What about us?, she asks us.

The hornero builds the nest with sticks, mud, branches. With branches as the one pierced through the neck of the man depicted in the shutter who watches the nest from the wall in the room. The story of that branch, handwritten, which runs along the wall like a caravan of laborious ants, and that man who carried it stuck in the neck, can keep Catalina León's hope: the hope that we can build something more noble than a love tent, that we can build a nest with the branches that embed on us, with the sticks of the spears that pierce us.

Cruz Imaginal (Imaginal Cross)

Catalina León

Daniel Abate Gallery

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