

Maze of Branches

Antonio Menchen

Leonor Serrano Rivas

Xie Lei

Galería Marta Cervera is pleased to announce 'Maze of Branches', with works by Antonio Menchen, Leonor Serrano Rivas and Xie Lei. The show will be on view from September 9 until November 13, 2021.

Imagine an arrival into a double maze, landing at a forest of confusing ups and downs, of mirroring gazes and duplicities. Just like a sunken river branch it catches whatever the river brings, like a blooming comb, along its wavy reflection.

If every garden is perhaps a constructed Eden – a piece of heaven in earth, a contradicted nature –, then this one could be a recollected, garden of remembrance, woven out of three different visions within: a distracted walk through a forest. And ruminations do punctuate the walking: speaking forms and shimmering mirages clash with concealed answering voices. Imagine accessing a garden to find a tale of the poisonous plant and its carrier's journey down a river: blossom of neglect, poppy upon the solidified and dusty framed screen (Menchen). But also, trapped in smoked perspex the phantasmagoria of a long-gone theatre with its dancers and figurines and sketches: shadows turned into cut-out shapes upon a golden sheet or mantle (Serrano Rivas). All this to encounter, at the very end, amidst the foliage, an incombustible transmigration: that of bodies, and energy. And light vanishes sparking in the retinal mirror, upon a thin layer of oil and accurate brushstrokes, and weight becomes lighter then (Xie).

Perhaps, by nesting all these different branches of research into a vegetal matrix, they all seek for a place where to root all these voices, all these tales: flower and tree, foliage and forest, but also translation and shapeshifting coming along. If every exhibition is perhaps a drawing on the floor – a mock-up, a sketch on sand – this one starts with a stolen fragment from Manuel Altolaguirre, *Maze of Branches*. Now imagine an arrival into a double maze of mirrored glances, into a labyrinthine drawn floor: each work with its own centre, beginning and end, all conjoined as if tied to its very shimmering shadow. Pictures all somehow linked in this garden with its tales like fragments on that branch: mere reflections, tricky echo vanishing in the corner of the eye.

Diego Delas

Antonio Menchen (Toledo, 1983), lives and works in Madrid. He finished his BFA in the Fine Arts Academy of Madrid in 2007, completing his education at the Film department of the Fine Arts Academy in Vienna in 2012 and received an MFA at Goldsmiths College of London in 2014. Solo exhibitions of his works have taken place at the project room of Luis Adelantado Gallery, Valencia (2021), Bulegoa z/b, Bilbao (2019). He has participated in group exhibitions at Artium, Vitoria–Gasteiz (2020), Sant Andreu Contemporani, Barcelona (2019), TEA, Tenerife (2019), Harriak-EREMUAK, San Sebastian (2019), Fabra i Coats, Barcelona (2019); Centro Párraga, Murcia (2019), CA2M, Madrid (2018), The Showroom, London, (2015), Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien, Vienna, (2012), Espacio F, Madrid, (2005).

Leonor Serrano Rivas (Malaga, 1986), lives and works between Malaga and London. She received her MFA from Goldsmiths University of London in 2015 and is currently completing her PhD at the Slade School of Fine Arts, London. Solo exhibitions of her work have been held at Matadero, Madrid (2019), C3A, Cordoba (2019), The Swiss Church, London (2017), Chisenhale Studios, London (2016), Galería Marta Cervera, Madrid (2015), Serpentine Galleries, London (2014). Her work has been part of group exhibitions at CAAC, Seville (2021 and 2019), Spanish Cultural Center, Mexico City (2020), La Casa Encendida, Madrid (2020), V22, London (2018), the Botín Foundation, Santander (2018), CA2M, Madrid (2018), Platform Revolver, Lisbon (2017), Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool (2016) among others. Serrano Rivas has been the recipient of the Prize Cervezas Alhambra (2019), the Young Arts Prize of ARCOmadrid (2016), and awarded artistic project of Caja Madrid (2014), among others. Leonor is currently preparing for her upcoming solo exhibition at the Reina Sofia Museum (MNCARS), that will take place in 2022.

Xie Lei (Anhui, 1983), lives and works in Paris. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, received his MFA in 2010 and a PhD in 2016 at the École des Beaux-Arts, obtaining in both occasions a very honorable unanimous Jury Congratulations. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held at Yima Gallery, Chengdu (2019), HdM Gallery, London (2019), Palais des Beaux-Arts, Paris (2016), Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris (2015), Grenier du Chapitre, Cahors (2014), Feast Projects, Hong Kong (2013). His work has been part of group exhibitions at Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2021), Messen de Clercq, Brussels (2020), PS120, Berlin (2019), Saint-Remi Museum (2019), Langen Foundation, Neuss (2018), White Space, Beijing (2014), Villa Dutoit, Geneve (2013), among others. Xie Lei just completed a yearlong residency at Casa de Velázquez as a member of the Académie de France in Madrid.