



Caption & credit (to be included in publications)

Teresa Margolles

Blowback / The Power, 2022

Haute couture gown, hand-embroidered; intervention on the surface of the sleeve with shards of glass from cars, collected in the streets as a result of the shootings that took place in Culiacan, Sinaloa on October 17, 2019. The haute couture gown was designed by the Sinaloan Alberto Scaal.

Plinth: 20 x 80 x 80 cm (7 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.)

Overall: 200 x 80 x 20 cm (78 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.)

Exhibition views: *Uncombed, unforeseen, unconstrained*, Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, Venice, cur. Ziba Ardan, 2022

Courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich/ Paris

Photos: Rafael Burillo

Description

The work "Blowback/The Power" presents an evening dress in the glamorous style worn by young women in beauty contests in Mexico. The dress was designed and elaborated by Alberto Scaal, a designer from Culiacán, who specializes in the particular style of these festive gowns. It is a luxury item coveted by many young women, while the great demand seems to grow out of an urge to find a false sense of royalty in commodity fetishism. However, behind the glamour lies violence and corruption, turning the precious garment into an object of desire that can lead to dangerous power: On the one hand, it enables beauty queens to achieve great fame, while fame endangers these young women to fall into the claws of the "narco". A subtle connection to this complex topic is made by the various "jewels" on the right sleeve of the dress. What at first glance appears as rhinestones are pieces of broken glass that Teresa Margolles picked up in Culiacán in 2019 after a shootout during the arrest of Ovidio Guzmán López - son of the drug lord El Chapo and leader of a faction of the Sinaloa cartel. At the time, López was released after only a few hours by the authorities, as the cartel's supporters had sparked a wave of violence throughout the city. López's re-arrest on the 5th of January 2023 led to a new series of fierce attacks in the same city, in which more than 29 people have already died. Against this backdrop, "Blowback/The Power" bluntly demonstrates the urgent need to acknowledge the brutal reality of societies where individual lives are seen as expendable and the display of ill-gotten wealth is often glorified.