

## RAÚL RUEDA

### NAVAJA PELUDA

Raúl Rueda (1993, Guadalajara, México) is an art historian, curator and painter. He lives and works in Mexico City. He holds a master's degree in Art History from the National Autonomous University of Mexico and a bachelor's degree in Art History from the University of Guadalajara.

He has presented his work in group exhibitions in Guadalajara and Mexico City. At the same time, he has developed his curatorial and critical work in institutions and galleries such as the Museo Cabañas, the Museo Carrillo Gil, Galería Curro and Galería Arróniz, where he has curated exhibitions and written exhibition texts, as well as critical essays for periodicals. He is currently part of the curatorial team at the Museo de Arte Moderno.

His publications include the guide *Ruta de murales en Guadalajara* (Secretariat of Culture of Jalisco–Arquitónica, 2021) and a chapter in *Los andamios de la memoria: 100 años de Muralismo en Jalisco* (Secretaría de Cultura de Jalisco, 2023), projects that reaffirm his interest in historical processes and visual narratives in public spaces.

Dark reflection, complex times, a mirror that shatters and cuts. In these paintings, the monkey is inserted into empty rooms as a displaced presence: extracted from its environment, it is inscribed within a human space that renders it both a reflection and an anomaly. Its figure oscillates between the familiar and the uncanny, as if condensing a twisted image of ourselves. In this relocation, the natural does not disappear; instead, it becomes unsettling, a rarity that reveals the fragility of the borders between the human and the animal.

In the Mexica worldview, the monkey is not merely an animal, but a figure charged with complex meanings: associated with movement, play, sexuality, and the arts, it embodies a vital energy that overflows order. As a calendrical sign, it refers to a cyclical temporality and a sensibility linked to creation and excess. This ambivalent condition, between the playful and the overwhelming, between grace and disturbance, resonates in the paintings, where the monkey appears suspended in spaces that seem to deny it that very vital flow. By being contained within the room, its energy does not vanish; rather, it withdraws and turns into tension: a contained echo of that which insists on moving.

In this sense, the work dialogues with the notion of the weird developed by Mark Fisher: that which does not belong, yet is there. The monkey, inserted into a human interior, dislocates reality; it is not simply an intruder, but a presence that misaligns the coordinates of the real. In turn, the empty rooms evoke the eerie: spaces where something seems to have happened or is about to happen, but whose causality remains absent. Thus, between the weird and the eerie, the paintings produce an atmosphere where perception becomes unstable and meaning, provisional.

The mirror articulates these tensions. It does not return a stable identity, but rather fragments, unfolds, and out-shuffles time. The monkeys do not find themselves in their reflection; they lose themselves in it. Much like obsidian mirrors (dark surfaces used as oracles), the reflection here is also a wound and a threshold: a blade that cuts the continuity of the real and opens the possibility of other times, other presences. In this suspended space, where the image is simultaneously appearance and disappearance, the monkey ceases to be just an observed body and becomes an agent that activates the uncertain: a figure that, as the Mexica believed, links creation, desire, and transformation with the unknown.