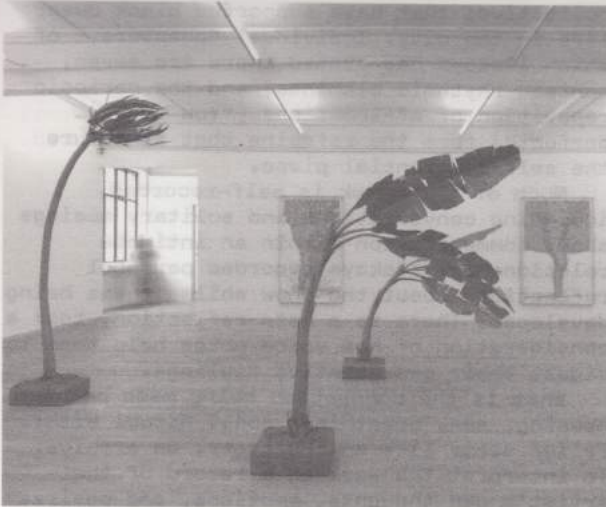


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10 LOS CARPINTEROS

Susurro del Palmar

Peter Kilchmann, Zurich

By Francesco Cagnin

Visitors to "Susurro del Palmar" (The Whisper of the Palm Grove), the latest presentation by Los Carpinteros at Galerie Peter Kilchmann in Zurich, may experience conflicting feelings.

The Cuban collaborative duo's practice aims to stimulate discourse by evoking a status quo generally inspired by the controversial political situation of their country of origin. The artists propose an articulated allegory for the strength, elasticity, and adaptive capacity of a Cuban population repeatedly afflicted by tragic circumstances, in this case the devastation caused by natural phenomena.

The first room of the exhibition makes clear that the destructive force of a hurricane is inexorable. Here, three bronze palm trees show the effects of high winds that bend but don't break them (*Plátano 1, 2, 3*, 2018). In the background, as if coming from a distance, one sees a tornado depicted in watercolor (*Tornado de Lego Gris*, 2018); it is not coming alone, but accompanied by a twin twister, also a watercolor on paper. Both tornado images are composed of Lego bricks; indeed, they seem to be constructed calamities, as if an external agent strategically assembled them piece by piece.

As the plot thickens, visitors find themselves in the eye of the cyclone. The artists have encapsulated the sound of a hurricane in a set of found kitchen cupboards that hang on the walls of the second exhibition room (*Alacenas*, 2018). The domestic atmosphere that the objects summon seems uncorrupted by the brutality that rages within; they suggest the most hidden corners of private lives. Yet this feeling of protection is suddenly jeopardized by a violent blast of wind that smashes a chandelier to the ceiling (*Lámpara incrustada en el techo*, 2018).

Walking back across the exhibition, one might question whether Los Carpinteros's objectified melancholy can impact the real situation it portrays. Who benefits, and how? Will sensitized collectors feel a need to visit Cuba during hurricane season? Outside of the gallery, Zurich's tallest skyscraper, the Prime Tower, stands solid with a presence that seems to resonate with the bendy bronze palm trees.

10 Los Carpinteros, "Susurro del Palmar," installation view at Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich, 2018. Courtesy of the artists and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich.