

THE MISSION

In the 1960s, Chuck Close began overlaying a grid to segment portraits taken with his Polaroid camera to guide his painstaking and incremental reproduction on a drastically larger scale. In his earlier work, Close's superimposed grid disappeared into the final realistic reproduction, but in his later experimentations, the grid exists as a structural element within a pixelated composition.

Rodrigo Zamora's process exists somewhere in between these two. Either by hand or on the computer, Zamora creates a sketch, segments the sketch into a grid, reproduces each section onto an enlarged square of paper or canvas, and assembles the puzzle of individual pieces to create enlarged, abstracted paintings. Upon close inspection, varied tones and intensity of India ink misalign with neighboring squares. Similar to the way David Hockney's "joiners" excite the movement of the composition with a patchwork of photographs taken from numerous perspectives, Zamora's slightly broken composite paintings also have an affinity toward Cubism's multiplicity of viewpoints.

While Close and Hockney are drawn toward reproducing human figures in their practices, Zamora presents paintings that transform undesirable objects into amorphous anatomies. As a pedestrian, Zamora takes photographs of neglected weeds, littered refuse, cloudy waterways, and tangles of cables. The subject matter often unnoticed and even considered objectionable within our metropolitan scenery is given vitality. The context is stripped away in Zamora's *Absence of Sound* series, leaving a montage of unkempt, overgrown weeds discernible within a conglomeration of black and white painted squares. Wherein his *Blue Sky* series, thinly painted fragmented lines depicting wires and cables—interlaced amongst transformers and fuses on utility poles—offer an unambiguous figure-ground relationship and more ostensibly expose Zamora's misalignments¹.

In tandem with his painting practice, Zamora periodically constructs small- to large-scale sculptures. Attracted to a repetitious geometric formality, Zamora relies on the grid to structure the assembly of his work. Rather than alluding to volume through the application of multiple perspectives as he does in his paintings, Zamora extends his abstraction to three-dimensions in *Atrapar el Tiempo*. His simplified sketches of objects found on the streets—frequently from those used in his paintings—guide Zamora's repetitious geometric wood forms that suspend off the wall in various directions, sizes, and perspectives.

Zamora confronts our perception of time and memory specifically within the context of our relationship to our urban surroundings. Photographs, whether a Polaroid or a

¹ Saavedra, Soledad García, *Counter-Memories: Ways to Keep Memory in the Now*, exhibition essay, *Formas para mantener un recuerdo presente*, 27 April 27- 2 June 2017, Patricia Ready Gallery, Sanitago, Chile

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digitally rendered image on our smartphones, transports a visualized artifact to our memory. Zamora challenges what constitutes a subject worthy of photographing and to store in within our personal records or share with followers. It is mundane subject matter that often becomes forgotten—never a photographic relic deep-seated in our consciousness. By confronting our mindfulness and recollection of discounted objects that are seemingly unworthy of our time, attention, and memory, Zamora confides in our splintered recollections and contriving imagination.