

LA CHOLA POBLETE *En el aire*
By ANDREA GIUNTA

In the Air. A film set, a stage, paintings and photographs of La Chola immerse us in the performance of her present as an artist. The sophisticated web of references and the spectacular *mise-en-scène* do not produce a single effect. It is a cocktail of quotes from an artist who is excessive for the extremes she touches, and exquisite for the abundance of cultured citations she weaves together. At certain moments, there will be a live performance. But most of the time, we will be walking through an exultant scenography—by the geometric pattern upon which we are invited to walk, by the walls into which her latest paintings are embedded, by the stellar red that surrounds the entire scene, by the potato and the braids, the Gordian knot of the identity that La Chola has guided us through since she settled in Buenos Aires. How can the whole be understood? The signs of an identity we already know are evident, yet they unfold in a challenging field that invites us to rethink and undo stereotypes and clichés. La Chola invites us to think differently about her work and what we already thought we knew.

The experience of altered perception takes place not only during the performance but simply by walking through the scene, which we experience as a stage of unfolding events. Let us reconstruct some elements of the performance: two chairs, two directors, Mauricio Poblete and La Chola Poblete. A host, a guest who sings, another who dances, another who performs poetry. A giant potato refers to La Chola's recurring themes and also to the great egg that Peralta Ramos presented at the Di Tella Institute in the 1960s. From its interior, Valentina sings a song by Los Redondos. In a sense, we will be witnessing a live version of her complex watercolors expanded in the space. The audience will be entering a set where a pilot episode is being filmed. A TV will later broadcast the performance. *La Chola en el aire* (La Chola on the Air) could be the title of the show or the series.

Is it possible to think about La Chola's work beyond the frameworks that have so far structured the biography she herself has narrated and constructed? Now that she is established within the context of contemporary art, are the stories of Guaymallén, her arrival in Buenos Aires, and her transition from a socially normed sex to a versatile sexuality no longer sufficient? Can we unlearn what we know and look at her work with new eyes?

There are no answers—only scenes. A backstage filled with photographs of La Chola, who, with her long hair and suit, reenacts the leap that Oscar Bony performed in the 1990s in his series *El triunfo de la muerte* (The Triumph of Death). La Chola replays this leap, with gunshots piercing the glass and the photographs. At the end, in a dressing room, another photograph takes us directly to November 22, 1963—to the scene in which Jacqueline Kennedy extends her body, trying to retrieve her husband's brain, scattered across the car's trunk. The car is not black; it is white. Beside La Chola is the platinum hair of Marta Minujín. The driver does not collapse onto the windshield; he looks at us. Instead of the couple on the grass, a man reads a newspaper in a wicker chair. The police officer on a motorcycle is now a PedidosYa delivery cyclist. And La Chola's clothing evokes the Chanel style, though it is not a pink suit but a *composé* made of *aguayo* fabric. Does Pop die and Andean Pop emerge?

The references to emblematic Argentine artists and to the 1960s function as a bubble of citations leading back to a golden age in Argentina and the world. A decade marked by the beauty of Pop, the dream of revolution, youth, and rock—alongside extreme violence. Repression was beginning in Argentina; the Vietnam War was escalating; social transformations were being blocked by coups d'état. "What times were those?" her mix of images and cultures seems to ask.

In any case, art never offers answers—nor does La Chola's installation. What we see is an identity that both she and society have constructed, now presented to us in a new context—disassembled, expanded into multiple parts. The paintings, with their characteristic forms bursting in color, place us before the work of an artist—such is the identity she wishes to record on all her documents. The stage, the performance, and the backstage allow for the unfolding of La Chola—artist and diva.

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