



# LA CHOLA POBLETE

*PAP ART*

19.04.2023 - 17.06.2023

Kunsthalle Lissabon is pleased to present PAP ART, the first solo exhibition both in Portugal and in Europe by Argentinian artist La Chola Poblete.

The word “icon” derives from the Greek “εἰκών -όνος”, a word more often used as a prefix, which simply indicates a figure, a representation of something. Over time the meaning of the word has changed and has taken on meanings closer to uniqueness. An icon is a model to be observed, venerated and possibly inspired by. With the same pride and ease with which the word “εἰκών” went from simply representing an image to a real model of behavior, La Chola places herself at the center of every work she makes, and becomes the indisputable icon that claims to be observed, venerated and, why not, to be inspirational.

A weighing scale with a ‘free potatoes’ sign welcomes visitors to Kunsthalle Lissabon. The curiosity and the sound of a record playing attract people to the exhibition space below whose floor is, for the occasion, covered with potatoes. Visitors are invited to collect the potatoes, and bring with them not only a part of the exhibition but above all a part of the artist who ironically offers herself in the form of a potato to all those who want to “eat her”.

The absolute protagonist of the show is *Mary II*, a sculpture of a virgin that stands in the middle of the space. Her structure recalls the “vírgenes para vestir” also known as “las Dolorosas”, sculptures which, starting at the end of the 16th century, were used mainly in Spain on votive floats during religious processions and which were well-defined in the upper part, almost always characterized by a suffering expression, and from the waist down instead they were left bare or absolutely uncharacterized because projected to be dressed, and not to show what they had underneath. This total lack of characterization from the waist down makes them mutilated, deprived of any sexual characteristics, while also making them free to be what they want to be.

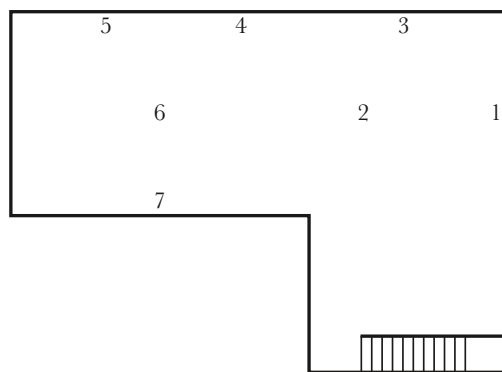
This freedom is the one around which the entire exhibition revolves. “When they expect me to be a victim, I am Diva” says La Chola in the manifesto of her new single, aptly titled Pop Andino. This a statement that seems to redeem even the Virgin who, for the occasion is made of bread, challenges the pre-established stereotypes of beauty. The first copies of the artist’s new album are showcased on an acrylic display that stands right in front of the Virgin. On the cover is a tribute to the great Italian singer Mina, photographed by Mauro Ballelli in the ‘80, for the cover of the album *Salomé*. The femininity of La Chola, as well as that of Mina, explodes in all her sexuality, despite the long beard growing from her face.

Framing the whole installation there are three watercolors from the series of the Virgins: *La Virgen de los Lirios*, *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, *Nuestra Señora de la Ansiedad*, and a painting where a black silhouette embodies all and more sexual attributes while proudly defending every possibility and hybridization that takes place under the eyes of god. All the works combine ancestral symbolism and mythology with the artist’s reflections on sexuality, religion, politics, ecology, and history, challenging the stereotypes and clichés with the sole purpose of subverting them and hybridizing their boundaries.

Finally, a series of posters depicting La Chola in all her iconic presence dot the space, announcing the launch of her new album, but also her exhibitions as if they were a world tour by a global pop star.

PAP ART is a hymn to generosity. The generosity with which the artist shares her security with others “I sell ... the grit that you do not have!” used to sing Renato Zero in the 80s. La Chola doesn't sell it, she gives it for free. By questioning the identities of bodies, the ancestral traditions in hybridization with our present time, the hegemonic culture, and the eternal discussion about beauty the artist offers her pride as a gift which is, at the same time, the most political and generous act that can be done.

La Chola Poblete (1989 Mendoza, Argentina) is a multidisciplinary artist who works with performance, photo-performance, video-art, photography, painting, drawing and sculpture. She studied Visual Arts at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo. La Chola Poblete has participated in group and solo exhibitions in Argentina and abroad such as: La Marca Original at Kirchner Cultural Center in Buenos Aires, Esercizi del Pianto at the Provincial Museum of Fine Arts Franklin Rawson, San Juan, SLAVE at the Carlos Alonso Museum, Mendoza, Tenedor de hereje at Pasto Gallery, in Buenos Aires, Ecce Homo at POGGI Gallery, France, Eros Risin at Islaa Gallery, New York, Garganta, at the Centro Internacional das Artes José de Guimarães in Portugal. She participated at ARCO Madrid with a solo presentation selected for the Latin American Art section, curated by Manuela Moscoso and Mariano Mayer. She has received awards such as Banco Ciudad in 2022 and was nominated Artist of the Year 2023 by Deutsche Bank.



1)  
Installation of posters, 2023

2)  
*Pop Andino*, 2023  
Acrylic, 33 vinyl records

3)  
*La Virgen de los Lirios*, 2023  
watercolor, acrylic, ink, graphite on paper, 200 x 152 cm

4)  
*Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, 2023  
watercolor, acrylic, ink, graphite on paper, 200 x 152 cm

5)  
*Nuestra Señora de la Ansiedad*, 2023  
watercolor, acrylic, ink, graphite on paper, 200 x 152 cm

6)  
*María II*, 2023  
Bread, iron, hair, wood, 170 x 100 x 100 cm

7)  
*Mientras Dios se quede en el cielo todo en la tierra estará bien*, 2023  
acrylic on canvas, 300 x 190 cm