

HOW TO HOLD

Solo Exhibition by Julia Aurora Guzman

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Story-Scape by independent curator Tiago de Abreu Pinto



I've been a blind man for a long time. So long that I don't remember what colors look like. It's hard. Have you ever tried to explain colors to a blind man?

Recently, I was walking and decided to go into an unknown place for me.

I must say this is a true story. I heard this voice. A really comforting one. She asked me if I wanted a cup of water. I agreed. I heard the footsteps going away and then coming back. I felt a touch on my hands, placing an ice cold cup of water within my grasping field. It was comforting I must say again.

I asked about the crickets. She asked me, "What about them?". I had another sip of water and in the meantime I started listening to the sound that surrounded me: waves. I could sense waves. Then, inch by inch of my body was feeling drops of water falling into thin air. "What is this?", I asked her. "Cycles", she answered. "What do you mean?", puzzled I asked. "Life", she said firmly. And, by my blind blunt look she continued, "What keeps on changing around us: life itself. Its cycles". And, in this moment, I closed my eyes and saw. With my body. And, my javic energy. I swear to you that I could sense the colors. "Are there colors here?", raising my head up into the air. "Yes, on the whole glass behind you, there are color correction filters". "What is it?", I murmured. "Color correction filters?", she asked. "No, which color is it?". "Different sepia tones", she said with a slight fear in her voice, "but, I'm afraid I can't tell you what it looks like with words". I took two steps into the room to feel the different lighting. "It doesn't matter. I sense it", I looked at the other end of the room and asked her to tell me what I was supposed to see. "Well, at the back you would see... I mean, there is a ray of light. Pink". We stayed in silence for a bit. "And, then? What more?", I whispered. "To your right, there are four columns. Actually, there are five but...". Silence. She murmured something in Spanish and I replied, "The other one is different, right?". And, she laughed, "Yeah". So, I told her it doesn't matter, and she continued. "So, these four columns are decreasing in size. The closest to us is the biggest one." I asked her if they were very high and she said that the highest one was almost two meters. "And, the shortest one?", I asked. "Well, it would be the anomaly". We laughed. "It's 30 cm, but this is another story, I guess". I asked her to carry on. "They are four steps away from each other", she said. "Behind them there is a wall, 9 meters long, that is empty". I tried to feel that wall, as well as the way the columns were making a semicircle enclosing a space within them; and, how that space seemed like a stage. "Apart from seeing the semicircle that the columns create", yes, she was already considering that I was seeing it, and in fact I felt that I was seeing everything. I was part of it. Not that much as the fifth column. I was a part of it, as someone that would be part of an experience.

But, let's not get distracted with that. She told me that there was another skin-toned semicircle covering the floor. Like two stages that were making a diagram at the center with the two center columns in between both semicircles. I asked her to stay in silence a bit so that I could feel her words. We walked a little and I asked her to continue. "On your left side, there are three doorways: two real ones and one fake one". By my face she said "The fake one is made to achieve the symmetry of the entire space". I smiled, and, while she was telling me about this wondering place, I was feeling that I was inside a body that was alive. I was at that moment a central piece of that space. It seemed that its stage was waiting for someone, something to give it life. But, then, what happens when no one is there? Only someone could give it life? What is it that life is only what we can see? I see it, therefore it is. I'm sorry but I can't see it. I expect it, I feel it, I sense it, therefore it exists. The space, its elements, its colors are, in themselves, the cycle. That one that the voice told me we all participate in.

She told me about many other things. About an autobiography that was hanging like a fiber-glass dipped in wax, and about a very very very soft piece that was really gentle and subtle that emanated these white and creamy tones, and that enclosed a fabric that contained sand from the north coast of the Dominican Republic, a place she was originally from. And, I remembered her telling me about something that was embracing the void, and how sometimes objects can hold other objects in different ways; of how they have a sense of laboring, a sense of care for another object so they are almost for each other. And, that voice didn't stop telling me, in a continuous tone, how the cycles keep on changing, until it fell into a huge silence.

I tell you. I saw the silence as I felt those colors. I was waiting for something to change me, and I became the change. I apologized for my lack of knowledge in the matters she was telling me. I listened to everything with lidless eyes, and what I can tell you is what a friend told me once: "I felt like an empty stage".

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