

Sara Jimenez *Fevered Tropics*

November 17 – December 23, 2022



Morgan Lehman is pleased to present “Fevered Tropics,” an exhibition of recent mixed-media works by Sara Jimenez. This marks the artist’s first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Jimenez investigates the nature of transcultural relationships and memory through installation, collage, sculpture, and performance. As a Filipinx-Canadian artist, Jimenez is especially interested in ideas of origins and home, loss and absence, from which she creates visual metaphors that allude to mythical environments and reimagined artifacts.

The artworks on display use as their source material imagery from early 20th Century American colonial text books written about the Philippines. The main piece in the exhibition, “Tainted Siege” (2017), is part of a series of hanging paper sculptures made from painted and collaged inkjet prints from these texts. In “Tainted Siege,” the black and white sections are sourced from the colonial photos while the bright red sections are painted and collaged contemporary tourist postcards of the islands.

The form of “Tainted Siege” was inspired by tropical canopies, overgrown vines, Spanish moss, and theatrical stage props of “the tropics.” In making this series, the color of the sculptures shifted from greens to bright reds. Jimenez was imagining a color that signaled poison and caution, which came from her line of questioning, ‘What would the color of the landscape be if the trauma of the past were visible?’ This led her to envision these vibrant collaged hanging pieces as radioactive, powerful, entities with agency. She imagined these entities as absorbing and regenerating all written and unwritten histories, as opposed to being passive backdrops of recorded events.

The collages are made from the material scraps that accumulate from Jimenez’s process of making the sculptures. These collages often employ a lattice structure or porous patterned boundary on the surface. In other instances, they take the form of fantastical and disorienting fragments of landscapes, such as in “Fevered Tropics” (2020) and “Roots Burrow” (2021). In regards to their chromatic sensibility, the works refer to the exaggerated, overly saturated sunset trope of travel postcards of ‘foreign places,’ and use hues that are seductive while also signaling danger.

Fevered Tropics had the honor of curatorial consultation from writer and curator Re’al Christian.

Sara Jimenez received her BA from the University of Toronto (2008) and her MFA from Parsons the New School for Design (2013). Exhibitions include El Museo del Barrio, BRIC Gallery, Cornell University, Miriam Gallery, The Brooklyn Museum, The Bronx Museum, Morgan Lehman Gallery, and Smack Mellon. Jimenez has performed at The Dedalus Foundation, The Glasshouse, and Dixon Place, among others. Artist residencies include Brooklyn Art Space, Wave Hill’s Winter Workspace, Vermont Studio Center, the Bronx Museum’s AIM program, Yaddo, BRICworkspace, Art Omi, Project for Empty Space, LMCC’s Workspace, and Bemis (upcoming). Jimenez is the recipient of the Cecily Brown Fellowship. Her work is part of the permanent collection of the Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice. Selected awards and grants include NYFA’s Canadian Women’s Artist Award, Canada Council for the Arts’ Explore and Create Grant, and BRIC’s Colene Brown Art Prize.