

## **Capítulo V: Heat**

**LagoAlgo**

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**Text by Jérôme Sans**

LagoAlgo presents its fifth chapter of exhibitions, titled *Heat*, which focuses on combustion and its multiple meanings and implications – be it ecological, social or political. Investigating forces of nature beyond our control, this exhibition cycle focuses on man-made disasters, addressing the immediacy of climate change and the threat of nuclear explosions, and amplifying urgent messages and voices. Red-hot, urgent, as if about to combust, four separate exhibitions are brought together to create a *burning Ring of Fire*, drawing up an unexpected constellation of international artists reunited for the first time: French Swiss **Julian Charrière**, Russian-born American **Ebecho Muslimova**, Spanish **Ana Montiel** and Mexican **Pedro Reyes**.

Each exhibition within this chapter echoes one of the four main types of combustion: slow, rapid, spontaneous and explosive. From dizzying to contemplative, **Julian Charrière**'s exhibition addresses the pressing dangers of a rapid combustion due to climate change, by notably exploring the delirium of industrialization and its collusion with non-renewable resources. **Ebecho Muslimova** and her burlesque, signature female character Fatebe takes over the walls of LagoAlgo, exploding its architecture, with walls that can barely contain her presence, like a spontaneous female combustion. In a spirit of explosive protest and outrage, **Pedro Reyes**' project **Artist Against the Bomb** brings together hundreds of artist-designed posters, both historic and newly commissioned, which call for universal nuclear disarmament to generate imperative, urgent change and achieve peace. Meanwhile, **Ana Montiel**'s vibrant masses perform a kind of synesthesia, painting with air the factors we often overlook—the things we don't consider. In the manner of a slow combustion, emanating like flameless heat, she reconciles the liminal and the tangible, the eternal and ephemeral, the monumental and the microscopic, the natural and the cultural.

## ***Earth Listens When You Speak, Julian Charrière***

Known for his interdisciplinary approach, which mixes artistic speculation and storytelling with scientific methodologies, material studies and field work, Julian Charrière explores ideas of nature and how these tangle and transform over time.

For this literally ground-breaking exhibition, Julian Charrière seeks to re-establish an emotional link between human beings and the Earth. The artist explores how our species relates to other stratified matters, particularly those which we appropriate as fuels, such as coal and petroleum. Investigating the hypnotic allure which these materialities exert on humankind, as well as more esoteric and spiritual readings of 'energies', several artworks within the exhibition act as transcendental portals, staging seances and oily meditations. Thus, the show winds together the geological past with the alarming uncertainty of Tomorrow, urging for a reconfiguration with our home planet and renewed understanding of the energy processes which we have historically placed out of mind and out of sight.

In the central space, two screens face each other. The first is the artist's latest large-scale film work ***Controlled Burn*** (2022), inviting the viewer on a cosmic and temporal journey, soaring through an aerial landscape of imploding fireworks. This disorienting voyage takes in an open-pit mine, a decommissioned oil rig, and the rusting cooling tower of a coal-fired power plant. The second film, ***And Beneath It All Flows Liquid Fire*** (2019) is a concession to more primordial heat, stirring with tectonic activity deep in the Earth. The darkened room is also punctuated by the volcanic creatures of ***A Stone Dream of You*** (2024). These sculptures, made with local basalt rock and obsidian spheres, plunge the visitor into the dark corners of the deep sea, staging an encounter with the spirits of so-called black smokers.

Behind one of the screens, ***Buried Sunshines Burn*** (2023) survey vast Californian oil fields, which like winding rivers of hydrocarbons, seemingly coagulate just below the surface of our reality. With LA being a city whose economic and cinematic influence is built both on and with fossil fuels, the series seeks to capture how even our ideas of the future are fueled by burning the lithic, producing smoke which both intoxicates, accelerates and chokes us.

Further underscoring the resonant consequences of digging up the past, an enormous lump of coal stuck within intricate steel scaffoldings invites the viewer to insert their head into a carved cavity in the boulder. ***Soothsayer*** (2021) acts as a reminder that the black matter extracted today as fuel once constituted thriving biomes, flourishing some 350 million years ago.

At the opposite end of the space, with ***Vertigo*** (2021), coal reappears in the form of polished pillows, on which the visitor can rest their heads. A reference to Brion Gysin's experimental and iconic 1962 *Dreamachine*, like a shaman in a hazy ritual chamber, the boulder comes alive in stroboscopic movement, invoking visitors to travel inwards and commune with the 'stones' we all carry within ourselves.

## **FATEBE GOGO LAGO ALGO, Ebecho Muslimova**

For *Fatebe Gogo Lago Algo*, Ebecho Muslimova presents her signature burlesque, contorted female bodies which invade the space, gallivanting around the walls. The female character who goes by the name of “Fatebe” – drawn from the word “fat” and the diminutive of the artist’s first name - thus makes her grand debut in Mexico City, transforming the dry white cube into an inhabited, humanized, ultra-exhibitionist, female place. With walls that can barely contain her presence, *Fatebe* seems to burst out from the two dimensions of the space, engaged in a subtle play between humor and violence, innocence and sexualization, self-portraiture and universality.

A jaunty, imposing, larger-than-life Fatebe is squeezed on one side of the passageway, struggling to make her way through. Fluid, almost liquid, the body expands in this monumental anatomic all-over, embracing the entirety of the space: the architecture literally becomes a body. Fatebe’s grinning face longingly gazes at the vast expanse of wall facing her where multiple versions of herself roam freely, playing with toys, juggling balls, knives, as though re-enacting a circus. A show within a show, this fantasy exhibition of play and performance, reunites for the first time a number of Ebecho Muslimova’s old works within a new site-specific context, thus convoking multiple histories, creating a catalogue of her past and future selves.

The female body is seen playfully interacting with objects and toys in surreal - at times gruesome - ways, humorously calling upon the violence that can occur in everyday life. As a conceptual daughter of Raymond Pettibon, Niki de Saint Phalle and Julia Wachtel, Ebecho Muslimova elevates drawing to another realm without pretention, creating a clown, jester version of herself. Fatebe appears not only as her creator’s disinhibited alter-ego but as a surrogate self-portrait of a mental state. In her absurd representations, pleasure and torture become blurred, almost indissociable, raising questions on whether Fatebe is the author of her own agony or if it is brought upon her.

Used as a tool to explore larger, inexpressible, sincere emotions, this playful icon embodies an explosive urgency in its feminist message that brazenly seizes the exhibition space. Using the power of the joke as a release from anxious mental states, Fatebe acts like a playful, seemingly harmless match that could soon ignite a blazing fire.

***Topologies of Experience: Streams.***  
***A pilgrimage Through the River of Being***  
**Ana Montiel**

For *Topologies of Experience: Streams*, Ana Montiel invites the viewer on an inner journey through altered states of consciousness. Known for her spray-painted multicolored works which often spill out of the canvases onto the exhibition space, Ana Montiel reflects upon the nature of human experiences, investigating the ambiguities and intricacies of perception.

Shown at LagoAlgo for the first time, her entoptic paintings - *entos (inside) / ophis (seeing)* – are poetic incentives for introspection. For the artists, these works act as “reminders of the inward and subjective nature of human perception, with our embodied consciousness co-creating everything as we go. We look through a window only to find our distorted reflection on the glass”. STREAMS – short for *surrounding trans-dimensional realities experienced as mutable sentience* – is like a pilgrimage that explores the subtle shifts between perceived realities and overlapping states of consciousness; together with their fractures and fluctuations.

Taking on an almost scientific approach, the artist probes our psychological landscapes, carefully studying the human experience. Like an analogy of haze and the uncertainty of perception, her signature spray-gun technique erases gesture, mutes human intervention, opening a door to an another, otherworldly dimension. Imitating radiant light, as if injecting heat into the exhibition space, her paintings are meditations in color on the matter of essence, like therapeutic canvases to glare into one’s inner self.

Invoking spiritual, inward geographies, STREAMS thus presents a cartography of sentient states. Like a bardo not of death, but of being, the exhibition is a celebration of liminality, of the interstitial states between waking and dreaming, mortality and immortality, and of, as the artist herself puts it, “the blurred tapestry of endlessly blended states of mind.”

## ARTISTS AGAINST THE BOMB

ARTISTS AGAINST THE BOMB is an exhibition of posters that call for universal nuclear disarmament. Each made by a different artist, the group comprises historical and newly commissioned works that detail a cultural history of disarmament movements and evidence the diversity of ways in which artists have expressed the need to ban the bomb. ARTISTS AGAINST THE BOMB uses a black and white palette for

its visual impact and ease of reproduction. These works can exist on a variety of supports and ephemera such as posters, postcards, billboards, banners, flags, t-shirts and social media posts, as we aspire to achieve the widest possible circulation of this message.

ARTISTS AGAINST THE BOMB presents the works of foundational conceptual artists, Art & Language; legendary feminists, Guerrilla Girls; performance artists Regina José Galindo and Pussy Riot's Nadya Tolokonnikova, as well as eminent sculptors Magdalena Abakanowicz and Isamu Noguchi. It also features indelible photographs by Robert Del Tredici and Ken Domon alongside protest graphics from social movements such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), founded by English philosopher Bertrand Russell in 1958 and still active; the epic Peace Squadron and Visual Artists Against Nuclear Arms (VAANA); and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Additionally, it examines performing arts, from the theater of Bread and Puppet to films like Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* and Marguerite Duras / Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, to an unexpected survey of literature, from an early anticipation of an atomic bomb, first envisioned by H.G. Wells in 1918, to Benjamín Labatut's latest novel *The Maniac*.

ARTISTS AGAINST THE BOMB, organized by Estudio Pedro Reyes in collaboration with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), was presented on the occasion of the Second Meeting of State Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) held at the United Nations, accompanied by a second installation at the Judd Foundation in New York City in 2023.

On this occasion at LagoAlgo, ARTISTS AGAINST THE BOMB presents a selection of 100 posters, including recent additions by newly incorporated artists as well as an innovative installation composed of banners that make the most of this space's emblematic architecture.

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