

# Magdalena Suarez Frimkess

## *The World Is My Menu*

kaufmann repetto New York is pleased to present *The World Is My Menu*, a selection of works by Magdalena Suarez Frimkess. On the occasion of this solo show we are also pleased to announce the permanent takeover of 55 Walker's lower level by kaufmann repetto, which will allow an expansion of the gallery's program in New York.

Magdalena Suarez Frimkess (b. 1929 in Caracas, Venezuela) lives and works in Venice, California. While she has historically collaborated for decades with her partner, Michael Frimkess, in the creation of their iconic ceramic works, Suarez Frimkess is undoubtedly known for her unique flare in the candid capturing of pop culture iconography, ancient histories, mythologies and intimate memory. In this presentation of her dynamic drawings, dates ranging from the 80's to the past few years, figures from the comic books or television series of yesteryear prevail as the heroes for Suarez Frimkess' tales. Bits of obscure or distant conversation fit into comic-like structures, with a focus on a multitude of fictional characters and their fantastical facial expressions.

This visual language is of a singular, interpersonal creation, rising out of the rumbling debris of pop culture and the most historically elemental imagery. According to Suarez Frimkess, this aesthetic is what continues to drive her practice as her freeform depictions of culturally sensitive chronologies act as a spontaneous agent for new dramas and mythos to emerge. Some of her most poignant works contemporarily articulate reimagined tales from a pre-Columbian world. She reworks these narratives into new humors, frustrations or delights for her eclectic cast of characters to reenact for the viewer, whether they are placed onto three-dimensional hand-glazed ceramics, or a torn page from a working notebook.

The title for this exhibition "The World Is My Menu," derives from a 2020 interview with Suarez Frimkess, and perfectly encapsulates her confidently humorous outlook on life and the allowance that this lighthearted nature has on her own art-making practice. The perceived lack of hierarchy within her work creates an interconnectivity built between what we understand to be "high art", such as culturally historic imagery, and what some see as "low brow art", like comic book strips.

One of Suarez Frimkess' favorite characters to work with is *Condorito*. Condorito (which translates from Spanish to 'little condor'), comes from a popular Chilean comic book strip which stars an anthropomorphic condor living in a small Chilean provincial town. He was meant to represent the lower-working class people of Chile and withstood the 1973 Chilean coup d'état, untouched by the censorship of the Chilean government. Suarez Frimkess says she finds various truths within comics, often calling Condorito "her very own philosopher".

Works such as *La Rosa* and *El Diablo*, which are recreations of loteria cards, have been featured in Italian fashion house Marni's various collections.

Although Suarez Frimkess's artworks in collaboration with her partner and life-long collaborator Michael Frimkess achieved acclaim, her first solo exhibition was not until 2013, at 84 years-old, at South Willard, Los Angeles. Subsequent solo exhibitions were held at White Columns, New York, and her work was included in *Made in LA* at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2014). Her two-person and group exhibitions include *How to read... Disney*, MAK Center, Schindler House, Los Angeles, (2017); *Looking Back, the 9th White Columns Annual*, White Columns, New York (2015); and *The Cat Show*, White Columns, New York (2013). She will be the subject of an upcoming solo retrospective at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in 2024.

Suarez Frimkess' work is held in the collections of the Hammer Museum of Art, Los Angeles, the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), and the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, among others.