

Photo courtesy of Graciela Martínez-Zalce.

Our Voice

he production of art — its forms and vehicles — changes constantly. But, has our conception of it changed at the same pace? In this issue, creators, academics, critics, historians, restorers, and dealers offer us a broad view of art today and how we relate to it. The enormous distance among auctions, galleries, and the community, between the digital and the ancient, speaks to us of a panorama both divergent and inclusive.

It might seem provocative to begin with a reflection about whether art is dead, but we have to understand that what the West has labeled as art for all of modernity has stopped being its dominant form. It might also seem provocative to include what has been called folk art in this cohort; however, this issue invites us to understand that a length of textile is one of a kind because its design, its iconography, and its manufacture are unique, linked to the world view of the community that produces it. Or that contemporary artists drink from the well of painting, collage, performance, sketching, sculpture, poetry, and digital media to "extinguish the shadows," eliminate the idea of the homogeneous, to recognize what is different and understand that what is rare exists and inhabits territories. This issue's contributors unfold before our eyes and minds all these possibilities.

Our brain perceives art in a special way. Colors, for example, intensify specific sensations in us, as interdisciplinary experiments show. But the act of creation is not only static and playful. It also has several uses, from the point of view of activism. For example, from a gender perspective, in prison, it makes possible new ways of self-representation, sensitizes and creates awareness among both inmates and their families, as the work of the Women in Spiral collective has shown. In psychotherapy, it fosters creative expression to find meaning and re-signify experiences because of its ability to symbolize. When it is political, from the point of view of the many feminisms, it turns into transformative actions that, on the one hand, modify visual proposals, and, on the other, impact collective imaginaries in a way that makes us able to recognize otherness and diversities. Examples of all this can be found in this issue.

We don't only confine ourselves to speculation, however. That's why it is so important that visual artists, textile artists, writers, and poets accompany us in this issue — and in all our issues.

Today it is imperative that we recognize the complexity of a phenomenon that is both monetary and intellectual, both aesthetic and technological, both digital and material, heir to a tradition in both following or confronting it. The fact that experiences are situated on the extremes does not mean that they exclude each other. This issue demonstrates that. We invite you to joyfully immerse yourselves in its pages.

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