

Ministério do Turismo, Secretaria Municipal de Cultura de São Paulo and Pivô present

PIVÔ 2021

# HELIPLAZA

MANUEL SOLANO

curated by João Mourão e Luís Silva



Manuel Solano, Las Torres de Satélite, 2021 (Courtesy by Peres Projects, Berlin)

09.05 - 11.06  
2021

PIVÔ

## HELIPLAZA

Do you remember when your parents used to take you to the mall as a kid? How everything inside looked bright, colorful and magical? Do you remember spending the day at the community pool with your family, playing with your toys in the water? Do you remember the colors, the sounds, the smells? If you do, if you share this experience, this collective memory of sorts, you were probably born in the eighties to a middle class family, for whom leisure and consumption were social activities and a sign of status within one's own community.

Manuel Solano was indeed born in the eighties, in 1987 to be exact. They grew up in Ciudad Satélite, a Greater Mexico City upper middle class suburban neighborhood founded in the mid 1950s, as a city outside the city. Probably the most well known landmark of the neighborhood is Torres de Satélite (Satellite Towers), a monumental public sculpture created by renowned Mexican architect Luis Barragán and sculptor Mathias Goeritz. The collaboration between architect and artist is now iconic, with its five triangular prisms inhabiting a square that is limited on its sides by the main avenue that gives access to the area. It is both landmark, monument and emotional architecture. The Torres de Satélite testify the rise of a modern and cosmopolitan social class, for whom affect is inextricably tied to how the surrounding urban landscape is designed, lived and remembered.

If Torres de Satélite marks the beginning of the development of the bond between architecture and décor on one hand, with affect and personality on the other, then Heliplaza is its apex. A shopping mall built in Ciudad Satélite in the 1980's, five kilometers away from Torres de Satélite, Heliplaza's design preyed on the tropes of awe inspiring modern architecture, by referencing the helicoidal structure of New York's Guggenheim Museum, while exploring the cultural relativism and the dilettante mindset of Post Modern aesthetics and design. Shiny panoramic elevators from which one could see and be seen, an endlessly spiraling path upwards, dramatic water features, translucent glass block walls, indoor terraces where one could sit and enjoy a soda drink and plenty of natural light coming from the dome-like skylight brought together consumerism and leisure together in a previously unseen way.



Manuel Solano, Camastros, 2021 (Courtesy by Peres Projects, Berlin)

The circularity and infinity of the mall's logo mesmerized young Manuel Solano as they visited with their family. But the image that is etched deeply into the artist's mind is not that of Heliplaza's logo, but of the massive tile mural placed above the entrance of the Liverpool department store in the Plaza Satélite shopping mall, depicting a stylized flock of birds taking flight. Solano remembers looking at the monumental birds flying away towards an uncertain destination, in all their avian glory, and understanding for the first time how perspective operates in a two dimensional surface. Their young mind had achieved something extremely important that very moment and they were thrilled by it.

Despite important, memories of shopping malls aren't the only ones Solano recalls for this exhibition. Leisure and décor, as signifiers of both a specific period of time, Solano's childhood, and of a mental landscape, or a personality, also materialize through the memories of lazy Summer days spent at the community pool, lounging in stylish, fiberglass pool chairs or playing by the shallow kids pool with a

dinosaur, always surrounded by a dark, saturated Forest Green color, commonly used to decorate the walls of these communal recreational facilities. The memory is vivid and we can feel it, in its 90's VHS color palette splendor.

Speaking of VHS, let us fast forward this narrative to 2013. By then Manuel Solano was an emerging, 26-year-old artist when they lost their eyesight to an HIV-related infection. Unwilling to be hindered by their condition and urged on by their friends, Solano returned to making work. But rather than the experimental art of their earlier years, they began anew with a series of expressive portraits. Their memory became the source material for a universe ripe with visual references to both pop culture and past experiences. Over the years, Solano's paintings, which they create by applying paint to the canvas directly with their own hands, have developed into an impressive body of work which tells us of pop stars, Hollywood actresses and formidable female figures as an autobiographical pantheon of the painter's formative influences. In Heliplaza, and for the first time, these larger than life female figures are replaced by décor and architecture. A direct response to and dialogue with the architecture of the exhibition space, the iconic Copan building, visual memories of glass blocks, laminate or formica surfaces, copper hues and lush indoor house plants, of shopping malls and food courts, of swimming pools and futuristic lounge chairs, now constitute a lexicon from which personality, and the self, can be distilled.

**João Mourão and Luís Silva**

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# MANUEL SOLANO

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Manuel Solano was born in Mexico City. Solo exhibitions: Seized by the Left Hand, Dundee Contemporary Arts (2020), Portraits, Peres Projects, Berlin (2019), I Don't Wanna Wait For Our Lives To Be Over, ICA, Miami (2018), Oronda, Open Forum, Berlin (2018), PUNCHIS PUNCHIS PUNCHIS PUM PUM PUNCHIS PUNCHIS PUNCHIS, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Cidade do Mexico (2016), Inherent Vice | Manuel Solano, Galería Karen Huber, Cidade do México (2016). Group shows: City Princesses, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2019), FR – Visual AIDS, PARTICIPANT INC, New York (2019), Strange Messengers, Peres Projects, Berlin (2018), 2018 Triennial: Songs for Sabotage, New Museum, New York, THEMSELVES, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Oregon (2017), Straight From Mexico City, Ruiz-Healy Art, San Antonio (2016), Open Sesame, Lumber Room, Portland, Oregon (2016).

João Mourão and Luis Silva are a curatorial duo that works between Lisbon and the middle of the Atlantic, in the Azores. Mourão is Director of Arquipélago – Centro de Artes Contemporâneas, while Silva is Director of Kunsthalle Lissabon, an institution that they both founded in 2009. A selection of recent exhibitions that they have presented includes individuals from Ad Minoliti, Zheng Bo, Laure Prouvost, Caroline Mesquita, Engel Leonardo, Sol Calero, Irene Kopelman and Naufus Ramírez-Figueroa, as well as group exhibitions at institutions such as Extra City in Antwerp, the David Roberts Art Foundation in London or MACE in Elvas. In addition to their curatorial practice João Mourão and Luís Silva are also contributing editors of CURA magazine and co-editors of the Performing the Institution(al) series of publications. They were the curators of ZONA MACO SUR (2015 – 2017), the solo projects section of the contemporary art fair in Mexico City and the Disegni section (2017 -2019) of Artíssima in Turin.

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JOÃO  
MOURÃO  
E  
LUÍS  
SILVA

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## WORK LIST

### **Untitled (Installation for Pivô), 2021**

Wooden structure with different coatings  
282 x 176 x 375 cm (installation)  
80 x 240 x 8 cm (glass blocks wall)

*Besides being extensively featured in the paintings, construction materials and décor elements from the period find their way into the exhibition in a more tangible, simultaneously physical and visual, way. They are the building blocks for two sculptures which anchor the narrative space of Heliplaza in a three-dimensional way. They are both memory and affect, architectural extravaganzas, décor chimeras and portraits all at once.*

### **Heliplaza Logo, 2021**

Galvanized steel, alkaline glass tubes  
90 x 116 x 7 cm

*The neon wall sculpture is a direct reference to Heliplaza's mesmerizing logo. Heliplaza is an helicoidal shopping mall located in Solano's childhood suburban neighbourhood of Ciudad Satélite, in greater Mexico City. Heliplaza's architecture preyed on the tropes of awe inspiring modern architecture while exploring the cultural relativism and the dilettante mindset of Post Modern aesthetics and design. Shiny panoramic elevators from which one could see and be seen, an endlessly spiraling path upwards, dramatic water features, translucent glass block walls, indoor terraces where one could sit and enjoy a soda drink and plenty of natural light coming from the dome-like skylight brought together consumerism and leisure together in a previously unseen way.*

### **Camastros del Club Reforma, 2021**

Fiberglass, polyester resin and wood base  
74 x 37 x 222 cm (each)

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*te the walls of these communal recreational facilities. The memory is vivid and one can feel it, as if one's one, in all its 90's VHS color palette splendor.*

### **Series of paintings, 2020 - 2021**

Acrylic on canvas  
Various dimensions  
Courtesy by Peres Projects, Berlin

#### **1. Heliplaza (Diptych), 2021**

#### **2. Liverpool, 2020**

#### **3. Bangles, 2020**

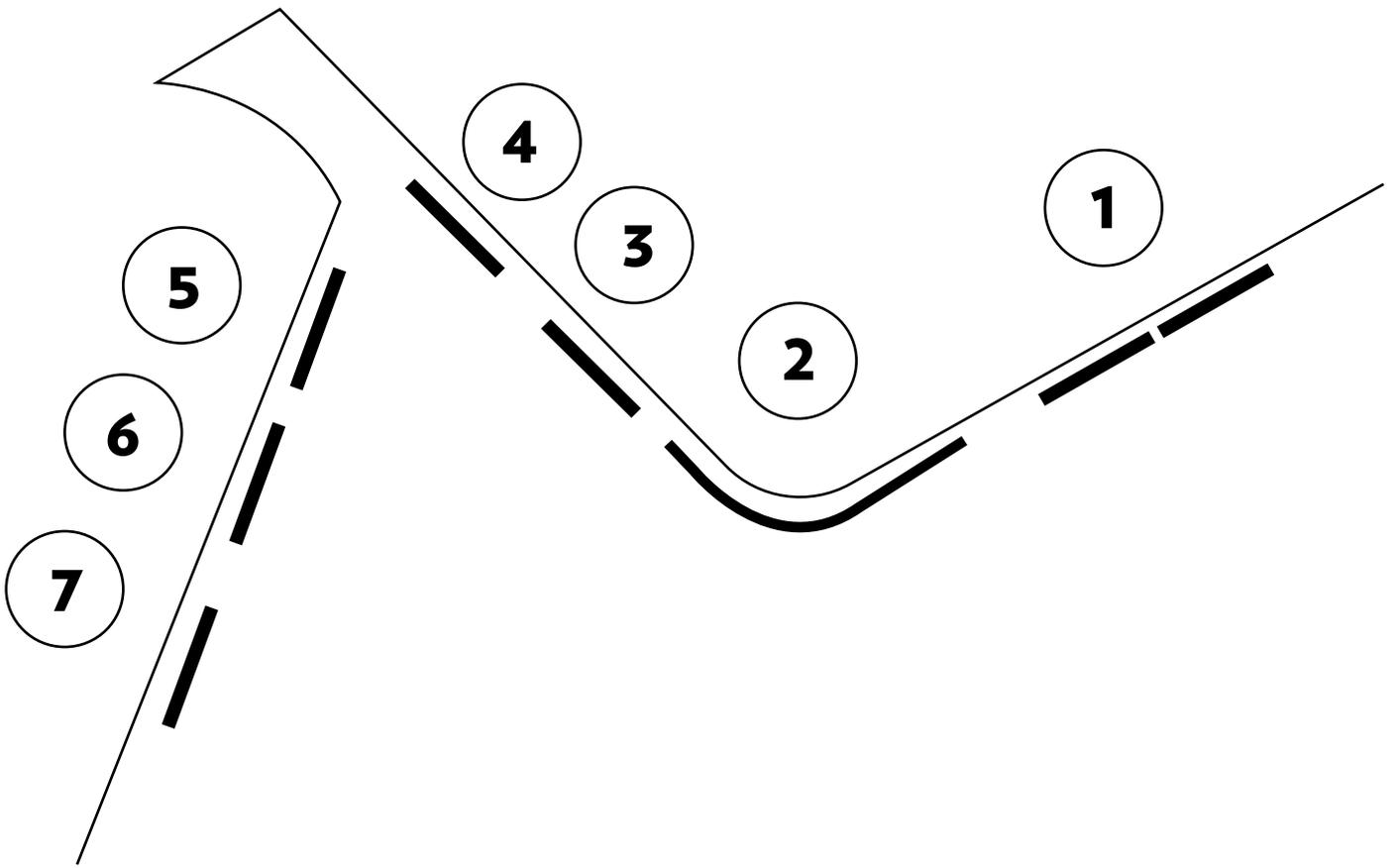
#### **4. El Chapoteadero, 2020**

#### **5. Camastros, 2021**

#### **6. Las Torres de Satélite, 2021**

#### **7. Glass Blocks, 2020**

*Made by Solano by applying paint directly to the canvas with their own hands, these new large-scale paintings are a direct response to and dialogue with the architecture of the exhibition space, the iconic Copan building. While previous works gravitated towards the depiction of pop stars, Hollywood actresses and formidable female figures as an autobiographical pantheon of the painter's formative influences, these new works tell us of visual memories of glass blocks, laminate or formica surfaces, copper hues and lush indoor house plants, of shopping malls and food courts, of swimming pools and futuristic lounge chairs, and constitute a lexicon from which personality, and the self, both the artist's and our own, can be distilled.*





Manuel Solano, Heliplaza, 2021 (Courtesy by Peres Projects, Berlin)

EXHIBITION TEAM

Installations  
**Oficina São João**

Heliplaza Logo  
**Neon Três Estações**

Installers  
**André Calvente  
Felipe Soranz  
Miguel Freitas**

Installations shots  
**Everton Ballardin**

Video documentation  
**Pedro Marques**

Translation and proofreading  
**Adriana Francisco**

Public guide  
**Tainá Alves**

Accessibility  
**Alexandre Ohkama  
Claudia Ferreira  
Temporal produtora**

Audience orientation  
**Severino Rogério Silva**

PIVÔ

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Executive director  
**Paula Signorelli**

Executive coordinator  
**Carolina de Sá**

Curator  
**Leo Felipe**

Producer Pivô Research  
**Thiago Montiel**

Communication coordinator  
**Gabriella Serrano**

Head technician  
**Matias Oliveira**

Production assistant  
**Marina Schiesari**

Institutional assistant  
**Jessica Gonçalves**

Visitor services  
**Daniel Lima**

Executive assistant  
**Luana Lima**

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PIVÔ THANKS ITS MAINTAINERS

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Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, Galeria Kogan and  
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Galeria Nara Roesler, Georgiana Rothier e  
Bernardo Faria, Graham Steele e Ulysses de  
Santi, José Leopoldo Figueiredo, Marcelo  
Tilkian Maia, Mendes Wood DM, Vera e Luiz  
Parreiras, Virgínia e Daniel Weinberg, Vivien  
Hertogh e Jairo Okret + those who prefer to  
stay anonymous**

MANUEL SOLANO

05th September to 06th november 2021

Free entry

Free classification

patrocínio / sponsor



co-patrocínio / co-sponsor

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