Peaty Earth

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Suelo turboso (peaty earth) is a term that has become relevant in my work as an artist. It describes a phenomenon with a similar structure to the work methods that I have acquired over the years: accumulation, the profusion of varied objects, and a substance lying in wait. The crucial difference is that the material that I use is not organic.

The term goes way back in my family. The study of peaty earth was part of my father's chemical engineering degree thesis titled "Methods for the Extraction and Characterization of Humic Substances in Peaty Earth." This is earth largely made up of dead organic matter in a humid place. The gases expelled in this condition taint the oxygen and make decomposition slower. Peat is used in agriculture as a base for a new generation of plants.

On remembering Bruegel the Elder's *The Triumph of Death*, I think of the city as peaty earth—a shared space with a large amount of organic material that is slowly decomposing. I don't just think about dead microorganisms, vegetables, animals, and humans, but also about the ways of thinking, the hierarchies, and political and religious views. The only industry that survives is that of death. I would include the following on the casualty list: architecture, establishments, historic situations, eating and work habits, ways of dressing, grooming, or hairstyling—everything found in a densely populated city. The triumph of death implies its dismantling.

In precise atmospheric conditions, decomposition takes time. All organic material creates a sauna of steaming cadavers without oxygen: the rotten fruit and vegetables in the square; insects piled on top of each other; undrinkable water; peat in every puddle; and the plants in the parks and green spaces, stripped of their leaves and daubed with mud, garbage, and excrement.

Cities are home to companies, institutions, and dwellings that renew their everyday habits from that which is already established. A longitudinal slice of the city reveals the streets, buildings, communication and transport systems, highways, plumbing, and the cables that gave it life by being inhabited by various generations.

In this project, peaty earth is also understood as a metaphor for the overlap of ideas that do not finish decomposing over the years—a setting that is not optimal for life, but which can reach the point of becoming fertile again.

Recently, *Peaty Earth* has become a way to make pieces of art: it creates new content from solid waste produced by the city—objects that were used and thrown away by inhabitants and visitors. These domestic elements, though inert, were part of our lives, and therefore carry our personal history. They are survivors of other times. In the correct hands, they can be taken apart and rebuilt in overlapping layers—one on top of the other—creating objects that are not alive, but apparently not dead either.

DATA SHEETS:

Guardians
Cardboard and paper construction
2019

For me, a good example of peaty earth in the piece is the pair of tanks wrapped in wrapping paper with a festive and religious connotation, found at the entrance of the exhibition. The blue baptism paper softens the object's truculent appearance. One not only appreciates the content's physical layers, but also the fact that layers of ideas can also emerge—ethical questions on what is good and bad for humanity, on what is civilized and what is not.

For Novices and the Experienced
Collection and event

2019

In the hall there are two barricades of new disposable diapers in baby and adult sizes. These two sizes represent the new and old inhabitants of the world. These diapers will be donated at the end of the exhibition in January 2020.

Political Seat
Assembly
2019

On a small platform, there is a dark throne made of recycled materials, whose design corresponds to the plastic material's original shape. Some rat bones made from plastic cutlery lie on this object that represents unmeasured economic or social power.

The Stain on the Wall, Virgin Mary's Tour
Mixed media
2019

Religiousness can be a very intense human condition. The religious image of the Virgin Mary travels in a case during pilgrimage. Next to this representation of the case, a poster hangs with dates and locations, announcing when and where she will supposedly make an appearance, as if it were a band or music festival tour.

Big Foot Soup
Mixed media
2019

Models of submarines appear hidden in the corners of a jungle representation, served in bowls of soup. The term comes from the expression *"*Bigfoot sub*,"* used by the North American army to designate the submarines used by drug traffickers since the end of the nineties. At one time, they were found every day. This piece tackles the everyday routine of an intimate meal with the homemade production techniques of these illegal submarines.

Ecce Mono
Assembly, circuit vending, and electromechanical programming
2019

In this science fiction-like image, a monkey appears to levitate in a type of space capsule. Both were assembled with industrial and domestic waste and electronic techniques similar to those implemented in previous projects. This installation shows random fragments of video and animation related to the spaceship and monkey's construction and movement. Using light sensors, the spaceship records the video and transforms it into sound, and simple electromechanical programming controls the on/off state of the devices.
This piece tries to represent the indefinite limits of scientific advances with regard to our position in the universe as a surviving species. Looking back and looking ahead, from the primate to the android, some remains of what we know as technology, past and contemporary, are focused on the space monkey (a frequently portrayed figure), in order to tackle the expected failure of the space race.

Relative Physics
Mixed media
2019

I have made this type of cabinet with measuring tools before. In this case, I'm commenting on the "relativity" present in the physical measurement of things. These are measurements of distances, forces, movements, and other aspects, recognized by physics and established for convenience, that, despite maintaining a behavioral canon, have become arguable in modern times.

Peaty Earth
2D Animation
2019

The kaleidoscopic image of peaty earth projected on the floor evokes monstrous jaws, similar to the mouth of Hell represented in the Medieval period. Surrounding the image, rope barriers prevent passers-by from falling.

Paralyze
Mixed media
2019

In some of our city's transport system stations, a fragment of *Für Elise*—a composition originally ascribed to Beethoven—is played for a few seconds. Is the incessant repetition of this small fraction of the melody supposed to be a sedative for users and officials? In the middle of the chaos, its incessant repetition can have an exacerbating effect.

Escopepaila
Assembly and photography
2019

Taking advantage of the overwhelming success of the *Escopepala* and *Escopeterra* sculptures, I present to you the *Escopepaila,* here, at a unique event in the city, where a community of hungry artists are fed.