

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2017

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

Linarejos Moreno
Art Forms in Mechanism

March 9 – April 15, 2017

Opening Reception:
Thursday, March 9th, 6 – 8 pm

Inman Gallery is pleased to present **Linarejos Moreno: *Art Forms in Mechanism***, the artist's second exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition will open Thursday, March 9th, with a reception from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, and will continue through April 15th.



Linarejos Moreno, *Art Forms in Mechanism XIX*, installation view

The work in the exhibition is an excerpt from a larger project that Moreno realized in early 2016 and presented at the Royal Botanic Garden of Madrid as part of PhotoEspaña. The exhibition features a series of unique photographs printed on gessoed burlap, as well as several large-scale inkjet prints, all of which are images of 19th century botanical models. “Art Forms in Mechanism” is a text- and image-based investigation that explores how modernity has produced systems of knowledge by decontextualizing the objects that serve to illuminate that knowledge. Moreno engages the relationships between the industrial serialization and the fragility of the natural world. With a background in conservation and an intense focus on materiality, Moreno strives to re-contextualize objects initially designed for industrial, scientific, or artistic realms.

“Art Forms in Mechanism” began when Moreno discovered a collection of 19th century botanical models while researching at the Cabinet of Scientific Curiosities, a Spanish historical archive. Manufactured by a European company that specialized in scientific equipment, the models are made of papier-mâché, gears, clips, hooks, and printed numbers and labels, and they were designed for hands on, practical use. Moreno was initially attracted to the models because, as she notes, “they contained the tension between the industrial and the humanity/fragility that I often research in my work. On the one hand, they were machines, with all their gears, on the other hand, even if they were supposed to be neutral scientific objects, they were absolutely pictorial and subjective.”

In photographing the models, Moreno adopts the style of the nature photography of German artist and educator Karl Blossfeldt, which was first published in his landmark 1928 publication of botanical photographs, “Art Forms in Nature.” Blossfeldt’s photographs were innovative in the field of scientific photography because of the leap forward they provided in magnification and detail. These images ultimately served as important sources of inspiration for the scientific community and artists alike.

In addition to employing Blossfeldt's style of image-making, Moreno has altered the introductory text to Blossfeldt's "Art Forms in Nature" by replacing each instance of the word "nature" with the word "mechanism." This copy will be on view as part of the exhibition alongside an original unaltered copy. A facsimile edition of Moreno's hand-altered book is currently in production.

Other areas of Moreno's practice are brought to light in her burlap and mixed media work *Art Forms in Mechanism XIX*, which introduces the interaction of three-dimensional objects with a photograph printed on burlap. There are references to Minimalism's use of raw steel and Post-Minimalism's subsequent embrace of the corporeal: stretched pantyhose extends from the photograph's surface to the floor, and is anchored by a rusted iron disc. The pantyhose encases a small color photograph of a botanical model and a steel hand crank that was once used in the artist's family's factory in Spain. Here, Moreno mines the spaces between art history and her own family's—and humanity's—relationship of industrialization. As in much of her work, fragments of architectural spaces, fractured time, and bits of industrial manufacturing, among other elements, play a significant role. Moreno notes, "the loss of the whole enriches our knowledge, offering fertile ground for the imagination." By decontextualizing elements of industrialization, Moreno employs an artistic strategy similar to the one applied to the Blossfeldt book's text, and in doing so Moreno disrupts the intended context for which these objects were first produced. Objects become unmoored and the imagination is invited in.

Moreno is supremely interested in dissecting how objects (and images of these objects) can assert their own subjectivity, and how they can disclose the processes (both physical and dialectical) that formed them. From a formal perspective, the photographs are equally straightforward and otherworldly. Their size, majestic and larger than life, invites close looking. The concept of re-constructing nature is one that runs throughout the history of art and science, from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to today's advancements in virtual reality. Within art history, one well known example is *The Four Seasons* by 16th century Italian artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo, in which each season manifests as a human portrait comprised entirely of painted objects, fruit, and animals. Arcimboldo related the objects to the subject by direct association (for example, in *Summer*, the portrait includes artichoke, peach, and peas, which grow during that season). Unlike Arcimboldo, Moreno explores the relationship between subject and object more obliquely. These remnants of industrial capitalism at once disguise themselves as the result of scientific study, then tell the story of how objects can travel between realms of use and value over time. As hand-made objects fashioned from machine-made parts, then photographed over a century later, the botanical models have acquired new layers of meaning through both the scientific and artistic process, over and over again.

Linarejos Moreno (born 1974, Madrid, Spain) lives in Madrid. Moreno earned a Ph.D. in Fine Arts and an M.A. in Interactive Digital Technologies in Communication at the University Complutense Madrid. Moreno has earned many awards and grants in Europe and the United States; recently the DKV Estampa prize in Spain and the 2015-2016 grant from the Transart Foundation for Art and Anthropology in Houston. From 2012-2014, Moreno was a Fulbright Visiting Researcher in the Department of Art History at Rice University, Houston, TX. She has also held teaching positions at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP), New York and at the University of Houston. Moreno's work has been shown internationally for over twenty years, and is in many public and private collections, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Library Collection of the Reina Sofia Museum (Madrid).

For more information, please contact the gallery at (713) 526-7800 or at info@inmangallery.com.



Linarejos Moreno, *Art Forms in Mechanism XVII*, installation view