

A photograph of a person from behind, wearing a long, flowing, purple and black patterned garment that resembles a cape or a long dress. The person is standing on a wooden floor in a gallery space. The background features a large, vertical, textured wall or artwork. The entire image is framed by a thick red border.

CAC
Contemporary
Arts Center

PIA CAMIL
SKINS



In Pia Camil's latest body of work, she reflects upon contemporary society by exploring the intersection of commodification and performance. For this newly commissioned works, Camil merges the aesthetics of commerce with that of the American Minimalist painter Frank Stella's iconic Copper Paintings. Stella's series, created between 1960 and 1961, consisted of copper oil paint on canvas. The Copper Paintings were Stella's first use of tape to create perfect lines leading to a more mechanical look. Stella's work opposed the Abstract Expressionist style which featured gestural brushwork and was highly emotive. Instead he sought to create a style embracing a more technical process and look with an impersonal feel. The series functions as both image and object, calling to attention the flat nature of the medium, while breaking with the set parameters of painting through the use of abnormally shaped canvases. In *Skins*, Camil recreates Stella's forms out of slat paneling, commonly used in low-end merchandising displays.

Within stores, slat paneling functions as a skin—covering every architectural surface and rendering it useable as a display space. Camil appropriates this material and affixes shelves and hooks upon which ceramic Bust Masks sit and cloaks hang. Throughout the exhibition Camil explores commerce aesthetics by adopting visual cues from dollar and department stores. Creating shop fixtures from copper instead of chromed metal and using Stella's iconic forms as a template for her slat panel pieces, Camil brings attention to the interrelationship of art and economy.

Camil also explores performance and identity through these works by drawing influence from the Jungian concept of the persona. This is the social face that an individual presents to the world. As Jung explains in *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*:

"The persona is a complicated system of relations between the individual consciousness and society, fittingly enough a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impress upon others, and, on the other, to conceal the true nature of the individual... Society expects, and indeed must expect, every individual to play the part assigned to him as perfectly as possible."¹

As Jung explains, the persona functions as a mask. In response to this concept, Camil has created a series of enameled ceramics that merge the aesthetics of jewelry stands and primitive masks used in ritual performances. These Bust Masks establish a connection between the accessories we wear and the character that we affect. Simultaneously, they are a commentary on the manipulation of the





Pia Camil was born in 1980 in Mexico City where she continues to live and work. She received her BFA from The Rhode Island School of Design and her MFA from The Slade School of Fine Art. Camil's work is in the permanent collection of La Colección Jumex, la Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros and the Kadist Art Foundation amongst others. Her work has been exhibited internationally at Frieze Projects, New York; Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, England; Saatchi Gallery, London; the Biennial of the Americas, Denver; and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain. Recent solo presentations include *The Little Dog Laughed*, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles; *Entrecortinas: Abre, Jala, Corre*, Galería OMR, Mexico City; *Espectacular Telón*, Galerie Sultana, Paris; and *Cuadrado Negro*, Artium Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. *Skins* is the artist's first museum solo exhibition.

female image in marketing and they articulate the artifice of advertising.

¹ Carl Jung, *Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 7: Two Essays in Analytical Psychology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 192.

Throughout the exhibition are a series of cloaks created in collaboration with Erin Lewis, a British fashion designer based in Mexico City, who specializes in sustainable fashion. These fabric works also draw influence from Stella's canvases and are made of material castoffs that have been dyed improperly by mechanical processes. The resultant effect is painterly and evokes the dynamic brushstrokes of the Abstract Expressionists.

Opposite Top: Pia Camil, *Telluride tunic (detail)*, Stitched fabric, 240 x 209.6 cm, 2015.

Opposite Bottom: Pia Camil, *Valparaiso green cloak (detail)*, Stitched fabric, 225.8 x 195.6 cm, 2015.

Above: Pia Camil, *Ophir interior (detail)*, MDF panels, copper shelf, ceramic bust, 240 x 210.2 cm, 2015.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a stage made after a Stella painting. This piece invites interaction from the viewer—allowing the viewer to create a persona by wearing the different cloaks placed throughout the exhibition. It is an opportunity to explore the different aspects of our own personality and become part of the exhibition.

Below Left: Pia Camil, *Slieve roe cloak*, Stitched fabric, 240 x 207.8 cm, 2015.

Below Center: Pia Camil, *Ouray cloak*, Stitched fabric, 240 x 240 cm, 2015.

Below Right: Pia Camil, *Ouray cloak II*, Stitched fabric, 240 x 240 cm, 2015.



You are invited to wear and perform in the various cloaks illustrated on cover and above.

CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

PIA CAMIL

SKINS

November 6, 2015 - March 13, 2016

Curated for the CAC by
Justine Ludwig, Senior Curator and
Director of Exhibitions at Dallas
Contemporary

Made possible by

Mrs. Alice F. Weston, The Hubbell Trust;
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Hear the artist

To hear more about the work from Pia
Camil herself, dial **(513) 463-3680**

Then:

- Enter **20#** for *Intro* (1:36)
- Enter **21#** for *Slat panel* (1:17)
- Enter **22#** for *Accessories* (:49)
- Enter **23#** for *Fabric* (1:59)
- Enter **24#** for *Masks* (1:20)
- Enter **25#** for *Persona* (2:11)



Technology provided by **Guide by Cell**

1 – *Lake city interior*

MDF panels, copper shelf, ceramic busts.
209.6 x 240 cm, 2015.

2 – *Telluride tunic*

Stitched fabric, 240 x 209.6 cm, 2015.

3 – *Ouray interior*

MDF panels, copper accessory, stitched fabric,
240 x 240 cm, 2015.

4 – *Ophir interior*

MDF panels, copper shelf, ceramic bust
240 x 210.2 cm, 2015.

5 – *Valparaiso green cloak*

Stitched fabric, 225.8 x 195.6 cm, 2015.

6 – *Pagosa springs stage*

MDF panels, 360 x 360 cm, 2015.

7 – *Creede II interior*

MDF panels, copper accessory, stitched fabric
210 x 210 cm, 2015.

* *Wearable Cloaks*

a – *Slieve roe cloak*

Stitched fabric, 240 x 207.8 cm, 2015.

b – *Ouray cloak*

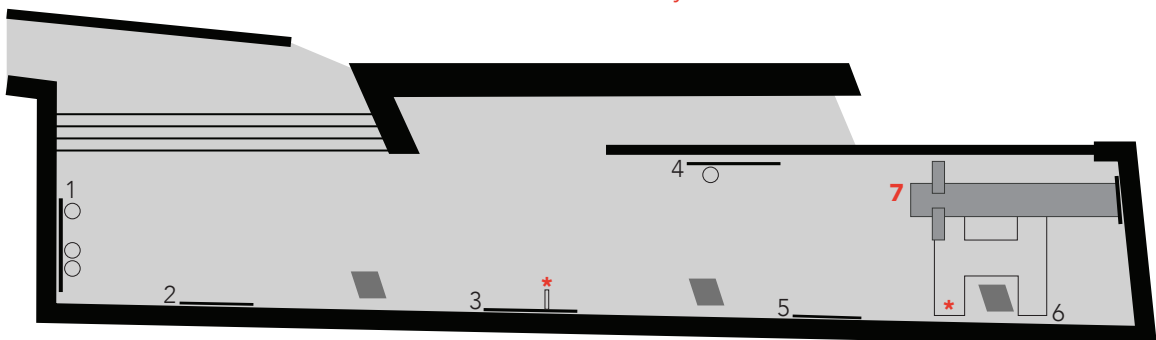
Stitched fabric, 240 x 240 cm, 2015.

c – *Ouray cloak II*

Stitched fabric, 240 x 240 cm, 2015.

You are invited to wear and perform in the various wearable cloaks indicated above in red.

Share your interaction    #PiaCamilSkins



Cover: Pia Camil, *Creede II interior (detail)*, MDF panels,
copper accessory, stitched fabric, 210 x 210 cm, 2015

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