



Miguel Arzabe, *Trio de San Francisco #4*, 2021. Woven archival ink on archival paper, 16 x 16 inches.

## **Miguel Arzabe**

### *Tejido Cultural*

September 18 - October 30

Opening Saturday, September 18, 4pm - 8pm

Walk-ins welcome, appointments encouraged.

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *Tejido Cultural*, a solo exhibition of weavings by Oakland-based artist Miguel Arzabe. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Arzabe sources paper ephemera and promotional materials from art exhibitions in specific locales, such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and Paris, to create intricate weavings with elaborate geometric designs. The exhibition title (which, when translated to English from Spanish, means cultural fabric) speaks to the ways in which Arzabe's mestizx identity informs and inspires both his technical process and the materials he enlists.

# Shulamit Nazarian

## Los Angeles

Born and raised in the United States by parents who immigrated from Bolivia, his practice draws from a longstanding and evolving tradition associated with indigenous peoples of Bolivia and the greater Andes region. Rather than using traditional materials such as alpaca wool or the now more commonly used synthetic yarns, the artist collects and archives ephemera from galleries and museums that reflect a Western art canon. By combining indigenous techniques and references together with the material ephemera of American and European contemporary art, Arzabe materializes the cultural production of a city into a geometric matrix, fusing his heritage with the contemporary culture of his present moment.

The works in the exhibition amalgamate Arzabe's travel log and experiences. Collecting and gathering ephemera from museums and galleries, the artist selects from his dwindling archive and decides which promotional materials he will cut into thin strips. The process fractures the initial image, disrupting its central intent of providing and publicizing information. As he weaves the assorted paper back into each other, Arzabe further disintegrates the original copy into a complex grid of abstract shapes and complementary colors on the front and back sides. The warp and weft relay a pixelated encounter with a once familiar form. With his latest body of work, he continues to source from his archive of ephemera, scanning the images to then print on archival cotton rag paper. This added step reflects Arzabe's rumination on our current moment, where paper flyers and handouts are scarce due to Covid restrictions and new contexts for dissemination, such as QR codes and social media.

Arzabe's practice illustrates how our society communicates through printed material: they function as makers of the cultural zeitgeist that traces a specific place and time. The artist shares, "I am invested in the process of recuperation, an act of reinvesting old things with new energy." Through the appropriation of material and images of works by other artists, Arzabe transforms the ephemera through indigenous practices, confronting the dominant narrative of Western art. Like the textiles of his Andean heritage, his weavings communicate complex stories through designs but with different media. Oscillating between form and content, nostalgia and presence, Arzabe methodically analyzes, deconstructs, and reverse-engineers markers of our time.

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Miguel Arzabe (b. 1975 St. Louis, MO. Lives and works in Oakland, CA) holds a BS from Carnegie Mellon University, an MS from Arizona State University, and an MFA from UC Berkeley. His work has been presented in museums and galleries, including MAC Lyon, France; MARS Milan, Italy; RM Projects Auckland, New Zealand; FIFI Projects Mexico City, Mexico; Marylhurst University, Oregon; Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, California; Albuquerque Museum of Art, New Mexico; the de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. He has held many residencies, including Facebook AIR, Headlands Center for the Arts, Montalvo Arts Center, and Santa Fe Art Institute. He has been featured in such festivals as Hors Pistes at Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Festival du Nouveau Cinéma Montréal, Canada; and the Geumgang Nature Art Biennale in Gongju, South Korea. Arzabe is a charter studio member at the artist studios Minnesota Street Project in San Francisco.