

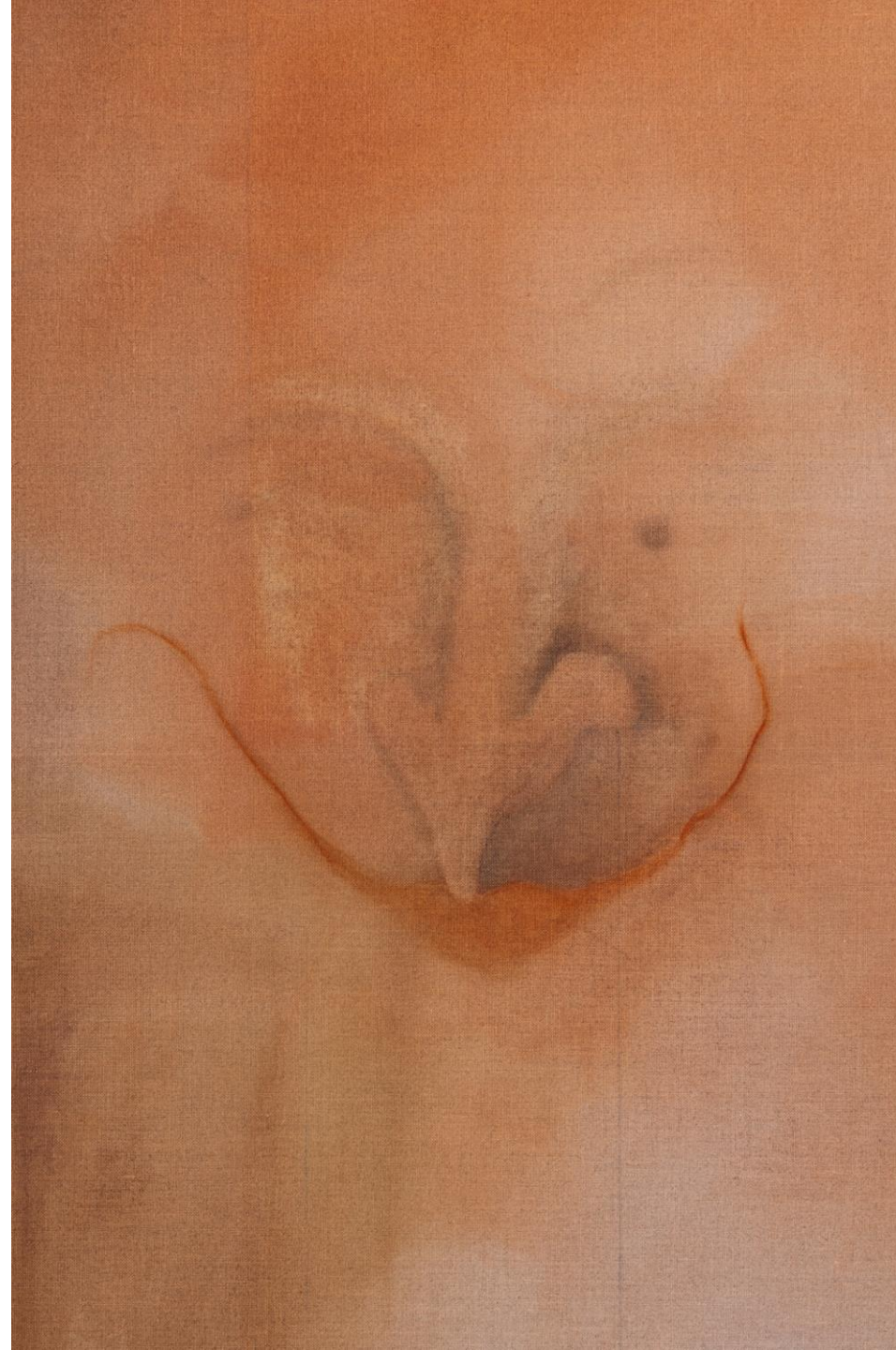
**GALERIA MASCOTA**

# LE MAGICIEN

Adam Alessi  
Leonora Carrington  
Francisco Toledo  
Alice Rahon

Curated by Laurence  
Dujardyn

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"The invisible speaks to us, and the world it paints takes the form of apparitions, it awakens in each of us that yearning for the marvelous and shows us the way back to it."

Alice Rahon, 1951

*Le Magicien* brings into dialogue historical works by Mexican artists Leonora Carrington, Alice Rahon and Francisco Toledo, with an ensemble of new paintings and drawings by Los Angeles based painter Adam Alessi [b. 1994].

Following an exhibition held last month in Brussels under the title of Sybil and inspired by French Mexican Surrealist artist and poet Alice Rahon, the presentation at Galeria Mascota continues to delve into Rahon's enigmatic universe and the shapeshifting character of her work. At the end of the 1940s, after having recently moved from France to Mexico City, Rahon created her only film *Le Magicien*, lost before she ever completed it. Set in a world destroyed by a nuclear war, it told the story of a magician living on the bottom of the sea who was appointed to create a new human. Initially publishing poetry with the support of André Breton and his Editions Surréalistes, it was in Mexico City that Rahon moved towards painting, influenced by its mythology and culture as well as by European paleolithic cave paintings and Navajo sand paintings.

Two paintings and one work on paper here on view offer a closer insight into her talismanic world transcending time and influences.

Far away from the strict figuration prevailing at the time, Rahon did not agree with being labelled an abstract painter and insisted on her adherence to Surrealism. She influenced many of her contemporaries, such as her close friend the British-Mexican artist Leonora Carrington, and German artist Wolfgang Paalen - to whom she was formerly married.

Her endeavor to manifest the prehistoric, and the application of non-conventional materials and techniques to the canvas such as sand, volcanic stone, and sgraffito, had a lasting impact on Mexican Modernists such as Rufino Tamayo, and a generation later Francisco Toledo. The work on paper here on view by the latter, features imagery from Zapotec folklore and portrays a hatted character ominously looming over a little girl in a cornfield.

This haunting atmosphere, together with the shapeshifting character and sense of mystery emanating from Rahon's works, are strongly present in the paintings and drawings of Adam Alessi. The dreams more often being nightmares, its characters appear out of nowhere as grinning ghosts from a hazy wash background. Pitchforks are a recurring motif in several of the works, representing the angry mob or a group of townspeople violently chasing someone.

These could be seen as retellings of old folk tales recounting the story of freaks or monsters being run out of town. Being surrounded by these works, a general sense of anxiety takes hold of oneself, and one cannot help but wonder if we are being trapped in an uncomfortable time vortex or conversely, if it is the present that makes us that self-conscious. The pitchfork drawings are a selection from a larger group obsessively made by Alessi in a single day, which lead directly onto all the paintings in the exhibition. *The Riot* combines the pitchforks motif with a portrait of an intensely staring vampiresque figure, set onto a background of a cityscape overrun by an angry mob. Another painting of densely overgrown pitchforks uses oil paint from old palettes as well as wax, charcoal and graphite, giving it a gritty sand-like texture.

It is this articulation of suggestive representations, by blending figuration and abstraction, as well as the formal experimentation and attention to color and materiality that can also be found in Alice Rahon's works. But above all it is their shared sense of painting as a key to the invisible and containing the powers of conjuration, stemming from an inner world that can either result in moments of marvel or horror.

Laurence Dujardyn

Adam Alessi



Adam Alessi [born in 1994 in Los Angeles, CA]

Is a self-taught painter who composes an esoteric realm with a host of familiar yet uncanny characters.

Beginning with a color field or a tenebrous background, Alessi incorporates figures which emerge from his dreams, confronting moments that veer the line between fantasy and nightmare. Rife with art historical references—one might find a corner ornamented with quilted patterns or a sardonic visage that conjures grotesque masks—his work inspires a simultaneous desire to look and repel, perhaps in nostalgia or acknowledgment of the anxieties and comedies that exist in our somnolent and lucid states.

Alessi lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.



**Adam Alessi**  
*The Angry Mob*, 2024  
Charcoal and oil on linen  
49 3/8 x 39 1/8 in  
125.5 x 99.5 cm  
[AA-2024-003]



**Adam Alessi**  
*The Townsman*, 2024  
Oil on linen- artist frame  
10 x 14 x 1 1/4 in  
25.4 x 35.6 x 3.2 cm  
[AA-2024-005]











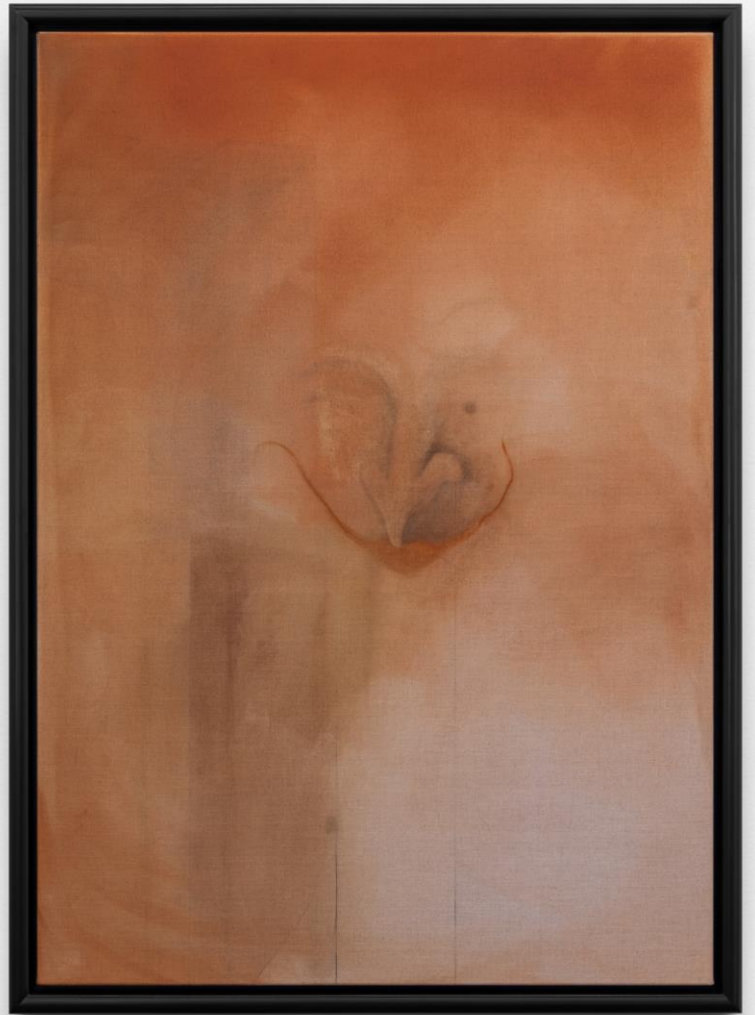
**Adam Alessi**  
*The Riot*, 2024  
Charcoal and oil on linen  
49 3/8 x 39 1/8 in  
125.5 x 99.5 cm  
[AA-2024-004]







**Adam Alessi**  
*The Grin*, 2024  
Oil on linen  
51 x 37 in  
129.5 x 94 cm  
[AA-2024-002]











**Adam Alessi**  
*The Stare*, 2024  
Graphite and oil on linen  
43 1/2 x 99 1/4 in  
110.5 x 252.2 cm  
[AA-2024-001]



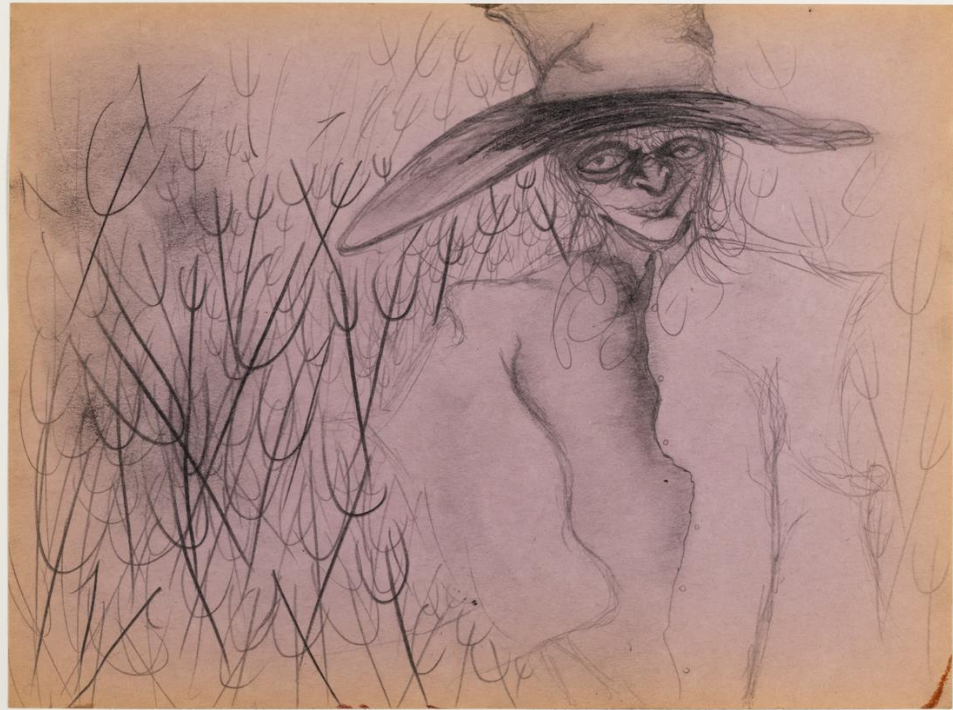






Adam Alessi  
*Angry Mob*, 2024  
Ink on paper  
14 3/8 x 11 1/2 in  
36.6 x 29.1 cm  
[AA-2024-010]





Adam Alessi  
*Scarecrow [Angry Mob]*,  
2024  
Graphite on paper  
15 1/4 x 18 1/4 in  
38.7 x 46.3 cm  
[AA-2024-008]







Adam Alessi  
*Angry Mob with  
Hats, 2024*  
Ink and  
graphite on  
paper  
12 1/4 x 15 in  
31 x 38 cm  
[AA-2024-009]





Adam Alessi  
*Pile*, 2024  
Graphite on paper  
11 x 9 1/2 in  
28 x 24 cm  
[AA-2024-007]



Adam Alessi  
*Tulip*, 2024  
Ink on paper  
13 1/2 x 8 1/4 in  
34.2 x 20.8 cm  
[AA-2024-006]









Born in Los Angeles, USA, 1994

Lives and works in Los Angeles, USA

### **Upcoming exhibitions**

2024

Solo show at Barbati Gallery, Venice, IT

2025

Solo project and publication with American Art Catalogues, New York, USA

### **Solo exhibitions**

2023

*Maiden Voyage*, C L E A R I N G, New York, USA

2022

*Cruiser's Creek*, C L E A R I N G, Brussels, BE

*Near Dark*, Smart Objects, Los Angeles, USA

2021

NADA House solo booth with Zoe Fisher Projects, New York, USA

Felix art fair solo booth with M+B, Los Angeles, USA

Spider at YSL Rive Droite rodeo drive with Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles, USA

2020

*Midday*, Smart Objects, Los Angeles, USA

### **Selected group exhibitions**

2023

*Very Friendly*, HOUSE, Berlin, DE

*Papertrail*, Matthew Brown, Los Angeles, USA

*Maiden Voyage*, C L E A R I N G, New York, USA

2022

*Les beaux jours*, C L E A R I N G, Brussels, BE

*What is it Like to be a Bat?*, ADZ Gallery, Lisbon, PT

*Supermoon*, C L E A R I N G, Beverly Hills, USA

*One hundred eighty-six billion steps to the sun*, C L E A R I N G, New York, USA

2021

*Stress Tested*, Public Gallery, London, UK

*TAILS AND HEADS*, C L E A R I N G, New York, USA

*Anxiety 2*, HVW8, Los Angeles, USA

Leonora Carrington



Leonora Carrington, born in Lancashire 1917/  
Mexico City , 2011.

Her work, like a magnet, attracts thousands of people who become captivated by her dreamlike world. Mythological beings, magic, Kabbalah, characters from Celtic legends, all combined with Mexican culture, result in the unique surrealism in the oeuvre of Leonora Carrington, whom Octavio Paz named "sorceress."

In 2018, the Leonora Carrington Museum was inaugurated with locations in the cities of San Luis Potosí and Xilitla. The museum houses several of her sculptures, as well as lithographs and other objects created by the artist.

The last major Mexican retrospective of her lifetime was held in 1994 at the Museum of Modern Art. In 2000, she was named an Honorary Citizen of what was then known as Mexico City and was awarded the Order of the British Empire.



Leonora Carrington  
*Sopa de pollo*, 1985  
Edition of 100  
Engraving on paper  
23 3/8 x 19 1/2 in  
59.5 x 49.5 cm  
[LC-1985-001]





Alice Rahon



Alice Rahon , born in Chenecey-Buillon,  
France, 1904 / Mexico City , México, 1987.

She was part of the circle of Surrealist artists who developed in Mexico. In 1931, she met the painter Wolfgang Paalen, whom she married three years later. Her relationship with Paalen facilitated contact with intellectual figures such as Eva Sulzer, Paul Éluard, and Max Ernst, who introduced her to Surrealism.

Rahon left behind a complex body of work characterized by great freedom and an indissoluble link between painting and poetry, between poetry and life. Her creations transition from abstraction to figuration, from dreams to reality, from words to images.

In 1986, she held what would be her final exhibition, fulfilling her desire to be honored and recognized for her career as a painter in Mexico, with a retrospective of her work at the Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes.





Alice Rahon  
*Lunada en el zoológico* , 1973  
Mixed media on velvet  
17 3/8 x 13 in  
44 x 33 cm  
[AR-1957-001]



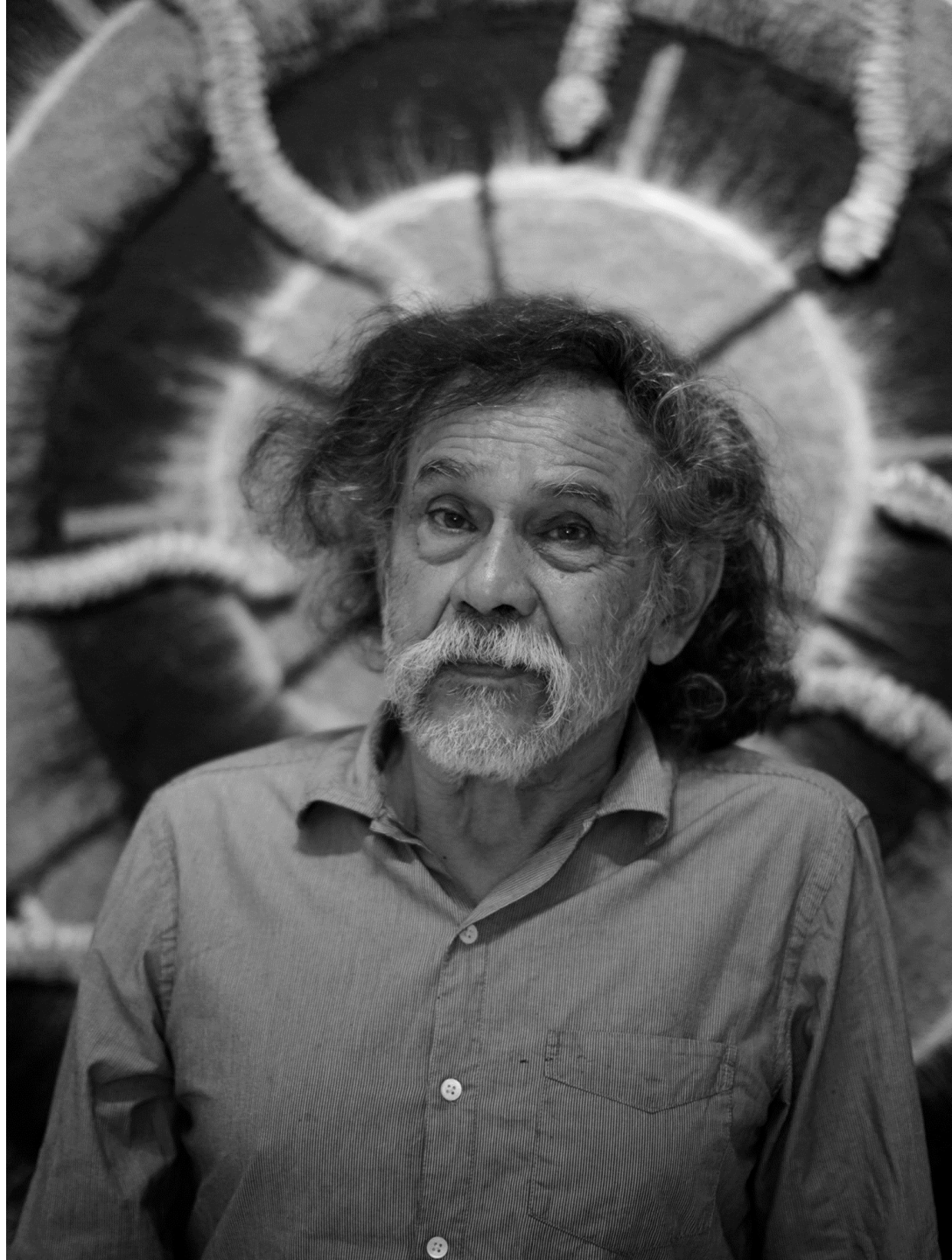


Alice Rahon  
*Juanito el Mimético*, 1956  
Oil on paper mounted on wood  
24 3/8 x 29 in  
62 x 73.5 cm  
[AR-1956-001]





Francisco Toledo



Francisco Toledo [born in Juchitán, Oaxaca, 1940 - Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, México, 2019.

He was an artist, cultural promoter, activist, philanthropist, and defender of human rights and indigenous languages.

Hailing from Oaxaca, he masterfully combined colors, forms, textures, volumes, and fantastical beings that inhabit his immense body of work. A tireless promoter of Mexican culture, creator of avant-garde institutions and projects, he founded universes with their own vitality, journeys through volume, textures, and the nascent color of creativity linked to myth, magic, and Mexican roots. It was in his native Oaxaca, alongside his fellow countrymen, that he deeply nurtured his magical world.

Winner of the National Prize for Arts and Sciences in the Fine Arts category, he is considered one of the most important creative figures in Mexico and the founder of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Oaxaca [MACO].



Francisco Toledo  
*Campesino y maíz*, 2019  
Mixed media on paper  
26 5/8 x 20 3/4 in  
67.6 x 52.6 cm  
[FT-2019-001]







# GALERIA MASCOTA

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