

Michael Benevento is pleased to present *Temazcal*, a solo exhibition by Mexican artist Martin Soto Climent. For his fourth installment with the gallery Soto Climent presents an expansive body of new works informed by the spiritual transfiguration found in the ancient Mesoamerican steam baths of Temazcal.

Traditionally held in stone igloos charred by burnt wood and swirling vapors, Temazcal is a ceremonial sweat lodge practiced by several centuries of shaman for those seeking wealth of spirit. Here, Soto Climent navigates the viewer through the gallery's four rooms and into the depths and materials of the *Temazcal*.

The exhibition begins with a large projected slide show of 515 black and white images ("*Temazcal*," 2018.) In it we get a vignette of the everyday life of Don Pedro, a shaman whose humble way of living drove the concept of the show. The exhibition continues with a myriad of objects upheld by golden wall plinths: a charred wooden egg ("*Moonlight*," 2018), a cascading hide of black feathers ("*Dark Flame*", 2018) a burnt upturned dragon sculpture (*Serpiente Emlumada*, 2018) half burnt bundle of leaning sticks (*Flechazo*, 2018) and the artist's signature stretched tight compositions on a charred black wooden frame (*Cocoon for a Dragon*, 2018.) The exhibition concludes in a dark simulated version of a Temazcal. A gold leafed pot (*Secreto*, 2018) given to Soto Climent by Don Pedro rests atop a golden plinth. This charred metal pot was used to hold "treasure" buried within the Temazcal ceremony. On the opposite wall a mesmerizing video of a fire burning (*La Puerta*, 2018) produces loud noises of animals and twigs crackling. The noises reverberate throughout the room and flood into the entire exhibition.

Soto Climent is well known for his surrealist manipulation of images and objects. His practice refers to the forms of the body and the psychology of desire embedded within a consumer based economy. For Soto Climent this psychology extends into the spiritual realms of being. *Temazcal* articulates the energies that bind the ephemeral of the spirit to the concrete objectivity of material form.

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