Chelsea Culprit
Mercado de Sueños
Curated by Miguel Bendaña
Text by Andrea Bustillos
March 26 – May 9, 2026

Chelsea Culprit has lived intermittently for the past ten years next to Mercado de Sonora, a 10,000-square-meter traditional market that brings together everyday commerce with spiritual and esoteric practices. Its history reflects several of Mexico City's urban, migratory, and cultural transformations throughout the twentieth century.

In this market one can find natural herbs and candles used for spiritual cleansings, confetti eggs, and statuettes of baby saints, alongside the latest trend sneakers, professional clown apparel, and seasonal holiday items; visitors may come to seek someone who can perform a Santería ritual, a tarot reading, offerings for the altar, or simply to buy the groceries they need for the week.

In this sense, the market embodies syncretism as a process of symbolic negotiation, where different traditions overlap, interact, and reinterpret one another to produce new meanings.

Moving through the market is a fully embodied experience: sounds, smells, and striking visual juxtapositions create the sense of a kaleidoscopic place—one that holds space for many worlds and many traditions at once. A place where one must dance, simply to move within the cacophonic rhythm of other bodies. It is a place configured through layers of phenomenological impressions and symbolic associations, where the boundaries between one thing and another remain fluid and uncertain.

While the artist's practice spans mediums including neon, sculpture, and installation, this exhibition focuses primarily on painting, exploring the medium's ability to hold multiple visual languages at once. Here, syncretism appears not only as a subject but also as a way of working: within a single piece, references to art history sit alongside gestures drawn from folk traditions and the textures of everyday life. Throughout the exhibition, painting becomes a way of processing and embodying experience—tracing shifts in light throughout the day, translating the colors of woven textiles, or allowing ordinary objects to take on unexpected forms. The studio becomes a space where observation, presence and sustained attention remain central to the work. Working across different visual languages, Culprit blends figuration, abstraction, and symbolism into vivid, layered compositions.

In Mercado de Sueños Culprit explores these phenomenological experiences, creating a series of works overlapping both the aesthetics and meanings, showing how the stimulating environment produces a personal interpretation. In this way, the exhibition becomes an analogy for how we move through the world itself: navigating complex environments and continuously generating meaning from the experiences we encounter.

Chelsea Culprit (b. Paducah, KY, 1984) lives and works in upstate New York, Mexico City, Mexico, Guadalajara, Jalisco. Recent solo exhibitions include ¿Tengo Rojo? at Ex Convento Santa Teresa, Guadalajara, MX (2026); Trece Lunas at Plataforma de Arte Contemporáneo, Guadalajara, MX (2025); Ask the Cinders at Solito Gallery, Naples, IT (2024); PSYCHOPOMP at Mariposa Gallery, Paris, FR (2024); Pole on Break, Queer Thoughts, New York, NY (2022); Amygdala in Repose, Morán Morán, Los Angeles, CA (2022); Malas Madres, Lulu, Mexico City, MX (2019); Fear of Seduction, Queer Thoughts at Maureen Paley, London, UK (2019). Culprit's work has been featured in group exhibitions at Stavanger Art Museum, Stavanger, NO (2023); Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City, MX (2020), Museo Arte de Zapopan, Guadalajara, MX (2020); TANK Shanghai, Shanghai, CN (2020); Palais de Tokyo, Paris, FR (2019); Museum of Modern Art Warsaw, Warsaw, PL (2019); Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, AU (2018); Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, MX (2018); and X Bienal de Nicaragua, León, NI (2016). Culprit's work is part of the public collections of Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami FL; Stavanger Art Museum, Stavanger, NO.

1. Sonora Jailbreak Minions (2018)
   Oil on canvas
   11.75h x 15.25w x 1.75d inches (29.85h x 38.74w x 4.45d cm)

2. 2 Cool 4 School (2018/2026)
   Acrylic on canvas
   96h x 62.5w inches (243.84h x 158.75w cm)

3. Cortina Decorativa Azul (2019/2026)
   Acrylic on canvas
   91h x 62.5w inches (231.14h x 158.75w cm)

4. Lilith (2026)
   Oil on canvas
   12h x 8w inches (30.48h x 20.32w cm)

5. Corona de Cristo (2026)
   Oil on canvas
   58h x 35w inches (147.32h x 88.9w cm)

6. Lost Glove (2026)
   Oil on canvas
   11.75h x 15.75w inches (29.85h x 40.01w cm)

7. Bolsa Morada (2026)
   Acrylic on canvas
   133.5h x 72.25w inches (339.09h x 183.52w cm)

8. Tiger Lily Terrors (2026)
   Acrylic and oil on canvas
   44h x 30.25w inches (111.76h x 76.84w cm)

9. Peluche Pole (Patrick and Mafalda) (2026)
   Acrylic on canvas
   137h x 68.75w inches (347.98h x 174.63w cm)

10. Good Morning America (2026)
    Acrylic on canvas
    59.25h x 35.5w inches (150.5h x 90.17w cm)

11. Candy Clowns (2026)
    Oil on canvas
    82.5h x 59w inches (209.55h x 149.86w cm)

12. Peluche Pole (Bowser and Spongebob) (2026)
Acrylic on Canvas
108h x 67.25w inches (274.32h x 170.82w cm)

13. Pink Flowers and Demons (2026)
Oil on canvas
51.25h x 51.25w inches (130.18h x 130.18w cm)

14. Sunrise Sonora (2026)
Oil on canvas
7.75h x 11.75w inches (19.69h x 29.85w cm)

15. Bolsa Rosa (2026)
Acrylic on canvas
141.75h x 72.5w inches (360.05h x 184.15w cm)

16. Forever Roses (2026)
Oil on canvas
51h x 35.5w inches (129.54h x 90.17w cm)

17. Cortina Decorativa Arcoíris (2019/2026)
Acrylic on canvas
92h x 54.5w inches (233.68h x 138.43w cm)

18. Mercado de Sueños (2026)
Celery, fabric, hibiscus flower, plaster, seedpods, shoes, spirulina, tumeric
Dimensions variable

Bathroom:

19. Little Joys and Sorrows (2026)
Acrylic on canvas
27.75h x 36w inches (70.49h x 91.44w cm)