



Portfolio José Guijarro
(PP Couta)
Selected works 2021-2024

Humor is a powerful tool to speak about difficult things. Acting as an opening to what appears to be inappropriate, undesirable or otherwise unwanted, it provides a way to connect with other people and their ideas. That is why I dislocate elements like the perspective, proportions and symbols in my painting, as a pretext to try to induce the sense of awkwardness in the spectator. I would like to make a simile between said dislocation (of the formal aspects of the painting) and my perceived dislocation or, as I would call it, the nonsense that is the world we live in. Then, the painting becomes a coping mechanism to raise questions, and try to understand, not through logic, but rather a more visceral approach.

There, where language fails to describe, a visual joke may take its place to attempt to understand.



Do bankers dream of fat flying pigs? (Switzerland), 2023
Do bankers dream of fat flying pigs? (Ecuador), 2024
Oil on canvas
199.6x215 cm (each)

Do bankers dream of fat flying pigs? (Switzerland)

Do bankers dream of fat flying pigs? (Ecuador)

The degree work *Do Bankers Dream of Flying Pigs?* situates itself between two economic crisis that I lived in my life. The first, located in Ecuador between the years 1999 and 2000, where the country suffered a strong economic crisis that ended in the change of the official currency from the Sucre to the United States Dollar. The second takes place in the year 2023, when it was announced that Credit Suisse, one of the most important banks from Switzerland was suffering strong difficulties, and therefore, was forced to be absorbed by the second big bank from the country, the UBS.

Through the written thesis and two paintings, I try to navigate these two difficult moments, putting them together. Although there is a chronological and geographical distance, both cases show similarities. Both were caused by the avarice of bankers and the faith in unlimited (and specially a rapid and excessive) growth, both had episodes where politicians were reluctant to save the banks (to not gain the disfavor of the people), but both ended with the state needing to step over to save the economy.

I use the reproduction of the symbols that surround both economic spheres, in the form of Alfred Escher (founder of Credit Suisse) and Antonio José de Sucre (liberator and a symbolic figure, as the currency of Ecuador carried his name), as an entry point to understand how capitalism has no values other than its own growth. By this I mean the loss of my countries currency (Sucre) in favour of the US dollar and the loss of the traditional bank Credit Suisse.

Here a question arises, the one of pragmatism. As it is obviously desirable to save the banks to save the economy. Even though the crisis in Ecuador caused a lot of pain, currently nobody would think of abandoning the USD. Similarly, everybody seems to agree that saving the CS was the most reasonable solution. Nonetheless, it is felt that bankers play with the idea of being saved if everything fails, perpetuating the cycle of unlimited (and unethical) growth.



The production must go on, 2024
Oil on canvas
108x120 cm



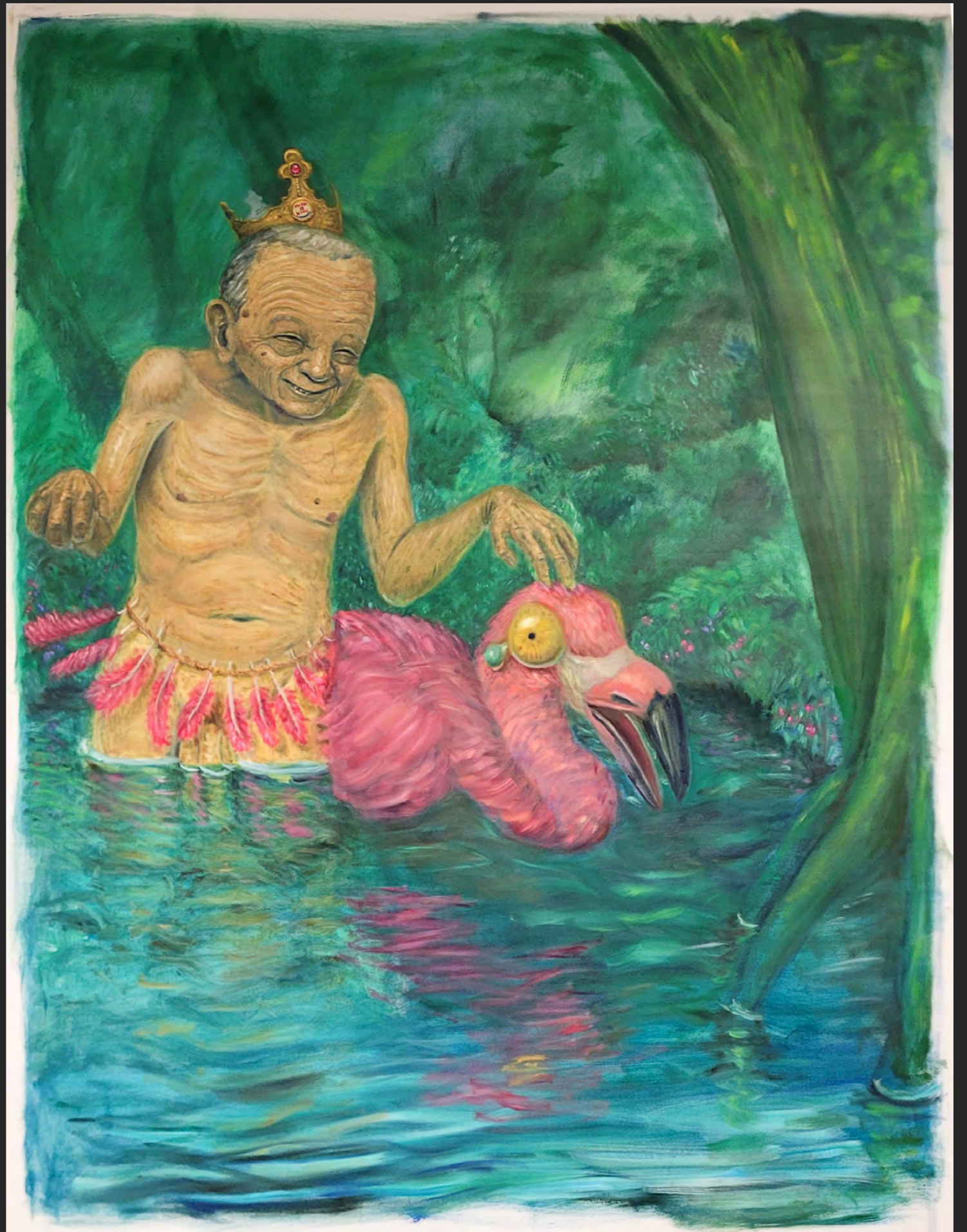
Soft pink clouds, 2024
Oil on canvas
108x78.5 cm



Un día común (a common day), 2023

Oil on canvas

210x280 cm



Papa is king, 2023
Oil on canvas
180x141 cm



MADONIA
CERVANTES

PAPA
IS
KING



Gula is Never Sold Out, 2022

Performance (with Hsuan Chao and Lily Pelaud)

Mixed media (sugar, helmet and tea pot modification, bell, head light, woods construction)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_r_GEwYynzg

Gula is never sold out

Why is everything here so sweet?

Life in Jogja is sweet, maybe extremely sweet; from its food and beverages to its cigarettes... Somehow, despite its adverse effects, sugar sweetens our life.

Gula is never sold out is a long durational performance, which recreates the production process of sugar. From chainwork to service, the work takes a playful approach on this historically loaded ingredient. Spanning from sweetness to a tainted colonial past, the associations that sugar arise are multiple.

This work is a site specific performance that takes advantage of the architecture of Galeri Lorong, inhabiting its two floors and that exists in three stages. At the beginning, visitors are welcomed by the vision of a serving person, who hands out tea and coffee with a very big and visible piece of yellow rock sugar. The vision is a little grotesque, as the amount of liquid does not correspond to the clearly exaggerated mass of the sugar.

Secondly, people notice the teapot performer, who strangely starts dancing when something from the second floor lands in the teapot. The sound is the most perceptible thing, as the sugar is only visible for a fleeting moment. The sugar acts like a coin on a machine, activating it, making the performer come to life. The quirky performer, who does not move unless activated by the sugar, comes to life for a brief time for the pleasure of the viewers, full of joy of receiving the sweetener. After some time the teapot heads to the front, dancing, to deliver the sugar that will be served to the visitors.

Third, the public walks past the serving station and past the teapot, noticing the sugar that fails to land inside. Now it is possible to see where does the sugar come from, the second floor. Here, another performer is tasked to take the rocks of sugar from one place, crawl through a limited space and throwing it to the teapot. The performer has a headlight that makes the workstation feel like a mining site. The strenuous work reminds of a not so sweet part of the extraction and production of sugar.

All three workstations are linked by the sound of machines that play by speakers carried by the performers, which travel with them as they move. There is a shift change every 15 minutes signaled by a loud bell. (sugar. helmet and tea pot modification, bell, head light, woods construction)

2022



Hola guapo, tienes sed?, 2022
Oil on canvas
100x150 cm



Los buenos vientos (the good air),
2022
Oil on canvas
70x30 cm



You write me I write you, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
60x80 cm



Kool Kats are never out of style, 2022

Acrylic on canvas

40x60 cm



Grüessli vom Himmel, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
100x60 cm



100% BIO Swiss, 2022
Acrylic and oil on canvas
35x20 cm



Trump Crossing the Skies, 2021

Oil on canvas

160x120 cm

CV

José Carlos Guijarro Herdoíza (PP Couta)

Lives and works in Zürich

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Education

- 2021 (ongoing) Master of Fine Arts — ZHdK - Zürich, Switzerland
- 2017 — Contemporary Arts — Universidad San Francisco de Quito - Quito, Ecuador.
- 2010 — Colegio Intisana - Quito, Ecuador

Solo Shows

- El cespèd es mas verde del otro lado de la cerca (2023) — +Arte - Quito, Ecuador

Group Shows

- Procesuando (2011) — Centro de Promoción Artística - Quito, Ecuador
- Pixel Fixer 4 (2011) — El Container - Quito, Ecuador
- Big Blank (2013) — Universidad San Francisco de Quito - Quito, Ecuador
- Expoarte (2014) — Universidad San Francisco de Quito - Quito, Ecuador
- Puntos de Fuga (2017) — +Arte - Quito, Ecuador
- Dissipare (2018) — Khôra - Quito, Ecuador
- Atmósfera Vol 0. (2020) — La Nube - Quito, Ecuador
- 39 942 Steps (2022) — ZHdK Projektraum - Zürich, Switzerland
- Sommerprojekt 2022 (2022) — Go-Green-Art Gallery - Zürich, Switzerland
- Meet/Clash/Lose/Find (2022) — Galeri Lorong - Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Awards/ Residencies

- CAC LAB (2014) — Centro de Arte Contemporáneo - Quito, Ecuador
- Salzburg International Summer Academy or Fine Art (2022) — Hohensalzburg Fortress - Salzburg, Austria
- Transcultural Collaboration (2022) — Zürich, Switzerland; Singapore; Yogyakarta, Indonesia