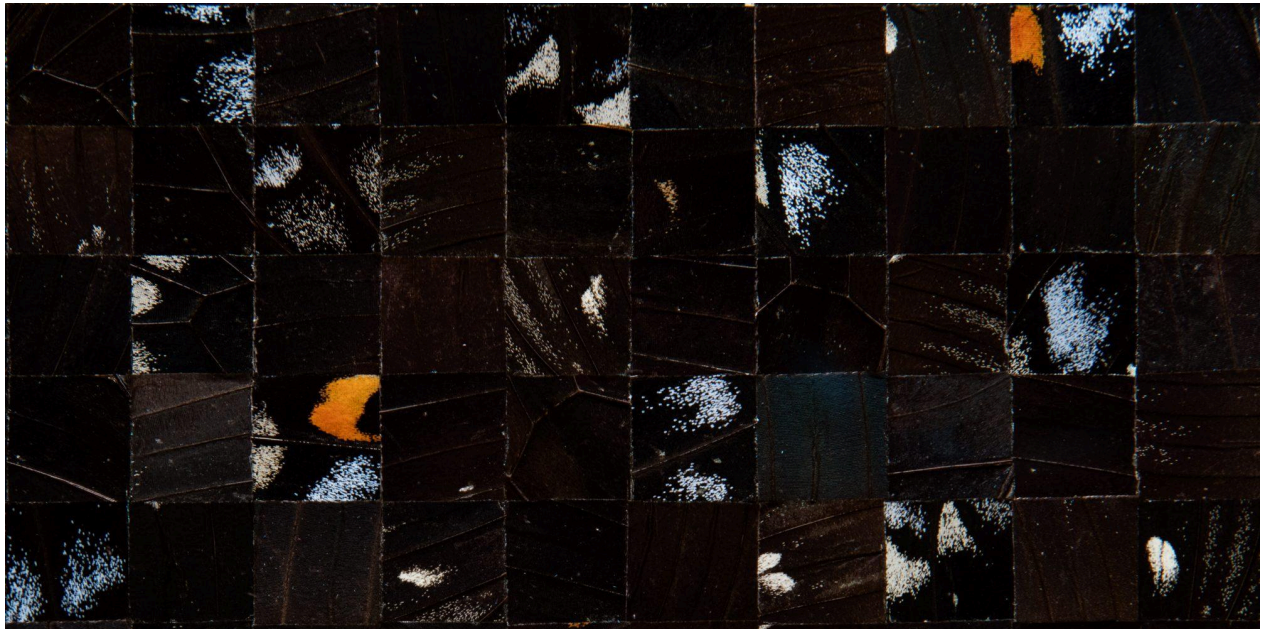


# GABRIEL DE LA MORA

## *LA PETITE MORT*



Detalle de la obra *3,600 I - P. G.*, 2021, de Gabriel de la Mora. Fragmentos de alas de mariposa *Papilio gambrisius* sobre cartulina de museo.

- **In his work, the Mexican artist explores unconventional materials, working with them meticulously while delving into themes of loss and eroticism.**
- **Curated by Tobias Ostrander, the exhibition is organized in collaboration with the Jumex Museum in Mexico City and will be on view at MARCO from Friday, May 29, through Sunday, October 25.**

MARCO presents *Gabriel de la Mora: La Petite Mort*, a retrospective of the artist's work from the past two decades.

The exhibition features a selection of nearly 90 works created using a variety of media and techniques, incorporating materials that might initially be considered waste, such as eggshells, fragments of Christmas ornaments, human hair, and butterfly wings.

In his studio, **Gabriel de la Mora (Mexico City, 1968)** arranges collected materials on a surface, resulting in almost minimalist images. His technique is so meticulous and obsessive that it requires a high degree of patience. This process characterizes nearly all of the artist's work, as he consistently collects obsolete elements and transforms them into visually captivating objects.

The exhibition is curated by art historian Tobias Ostrander (Boston, USA, 1970), who has served as the Estrellita B. Brodsky Assistant Curator of Latin American Art at Tate Modern (London) since June 2021.

On a discursive level, the exhibition analyzes the recurring presence of desire and eroticism in de la Mora's practice, addressing both the surface tension of the works and the unconscious creative impulses that inform them. The title, translated into Spanish as *la muerte pequeña*, is a French term used to refer to orgasm.

Organized in collaboration with the Jumex Museum, the exhibition forms part of MARCO's efforts to examine the work and careers of prominent Mexican artists on the international stage. It also aims to establish partnerships that facilitate the exchange of exhibitions between Monterrey and other institutions.

MARCO receives funding from the Government of the State of Nuevo León through the State Ministry of Culture. The museum extends its gratitude to its benefactors for their support: Arca Continental, Cemex, Cydsa, Femsa, Frisa, Xignux, and Alberto Fernández G., as well as Arte Expuesto and VivaAerobus.

## GALLERY WALKTHROUGH

The exhibition explores two central themes in the artist's work: loss—symbolic or physical death—which manifests through his materials, and erotic sexual pleasure. The works are organized into six thematic sections: *Cuerpos*, *Borradura*, *Calor*, *El filo del deseo*, *Tacto* y *El placer del espectador* (*Bodies*, *Erasure*, *Heat*, *The Edge of Desire*, *Touch*, and *The Viewer's Pleasure*).

The first section, *Cuerpos*, brings together works that explore human bodies and physical presence. The work *Memoria I, 24.10.07* (2007) consists of seventeen resin casts of human skulls representing living members of the artist's family, as well as his deceased father and sister. Also on display are drawings made using human hair, a technique he has developed since 2004 to question the boundaries between drawing, sculpture, and portraiture. One example is *1951-G.M-25-1993* (2007), a portrait of his father.

*Borradura* features works that are part of a recurring process in the artist's practice: the alteration of a material or image's original state, whether through wear and tear in its original context or through an action performed by the artist. In addition to objects such as street posters or weathered rooftops recontextualized by de la Mora, the section includes *Página 42 / 25 de agosto de 2009 / 6.6 gramos* (2009), an intervention on magazine pages that have been erased by the artist, preventing the explicit images from being seen.

Fire is an element that the artist has employed both technically and metaphorically, as seen in the section *Calor*. The work *Introduction* (2003–2009) consists of six pages from the artist's master's thesis that have

been burned. The charred pages have been transformed into delicate sculptures, whose lyrical black forms were created by the random movements of flames and air.

The section *El filo del deseo* delves into concepts related to dimensionality—namely edges or boundaries, as well as surfaces and depths—which the artist has explored both technically in his processes and through the actions involved in his procedures. For example, in the work *3,936 Layers of Paint 1A - 1B* (2011), the artist created an object composed of nearly four thousand layers of acrylic paint. The flat form is cut into a square shape, revealing the colors of the different layers.

In *Tacto*, the focus is on physical contact. The work *1,152 - I / Pi.* (2014) deepens this exploration of traces and memory, featuring over a thousand used leather shoe soles that display various patterns of wear resulting from habitual movement.

In *El placer del espectador*, the artist highlights the importance of the audience in relation to a work, while also making direct reference to Roland Barthes's influential 1973 essay "El placer del lector" (The Pleasure of the Text). The works brought together in this section invite participation and interaction. Large-scale examples of the artist's recent work include textured monochromes that incorporate thousands of fragments of eggshells. Among them are pale blue-green and pure white eggshell compositions, such as *467,685* (2020). These pieces draw viewers in with their seemingly miraculous surfaces, prompting questions about their creation and the time required to produce them.

The exhibition invites the public not only to take a closer look at the work of Gabriel de la Mora—one of today's most significant Mexican artists—but also to reflect on the beauty found in the everyday, from a layer of paint to an eggshell, and how these elements can evoke profound themes such as loss and the ephemeral nature of human existence.

#### TICKETS, HOURS, AND ADMISSION:

- **Open Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Extended hours on Wednesdays until 8:00 p.m.**
- **Free admission on Wednesdays and Sundays.**
- **General admission: \$120 pesos. Discounted admission: \$100 pesos (teachers, students, INAPAM cardholders, and children under 15). Free admission daily for children aged 5 and under.**

#### EXHIBITION INFORMATION:

**Title:** *Gabriel de la Mora: La Petite Mort* | **On display:** From Friday, May 29, to Sunday October 25, 2026 | **Museography:** MARCO | **Curator:** Tobias Ostrander | **Number of Works:** 92 | **Galleries:** 6 to 8, Second Floor | **Technics:** Painting, installation, sculpture, site-specific work, among others.

## SEMBLANZAS

**Gabriel de la Mora (Mexico City, 1968)** earned a Master's degree in Painting (2001–2003) from the Pratt Institute in New York and a Bachelor's degree in Architecture (1987–1991) from the Universidad Anáhuac del Norte in Mexico City. He has been a Fulbright-García Robles fellow, a fellow of the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation, and a member of the National System of Creators (2013–2015) of the National Fund for Culture and the Arts (FONCA). His work is part of public and private collections in Mexico and abroad, including: the JUMEX Foundation/Collection, the Rufino Tamayo International Museum of Contemporary Art, the Carrillo Gil Art Museum, the University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC), and the Museum of Modern Art, Mexico City; the Amparo Museum, Puebla, Mexico; Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, California; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; El Museo del Barrio, NYC, New York; Albright-Knox, Buffalo, New York; Perez Art Museum, Miami, Florida; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky; Galician Center for Contemporary Art, Santiago de Compostela; Banco de la República Collection and Museum of Modern Art of Bogotá, Bogotá; Museum of Latin American Art (MALBA), Buenos Aires; M+ Hong Kong. He is represented by Proyectos Monclova Gallery (Mexico City), PERROTIN (Paris, New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, Hong Kong, London, Dubai), Sicardi Ayers Bacino (Houston, Texas), and Simões de Assis (São Paulo, Curitiba, Balneário Camboriú, Brazil).

**Tobias Ostrander (Boston, EUA, 1970)** is the Estrellita B. Brodsky Adjunct Curator, Latin American Art at Tate. He is the former Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs at the Pérez Art Museum Miami (2011-2019). Major exhibitions developed for PAMM include Beatriz González: A Retrospective; Beatriz Milhazes: Jardim Botânico; On the Horizon: Contemporary Cuban Art from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection; Ebony G. Patterson: ...while the dew is still on the roses... and Poetics of Relation, a group exhibition inspired by the writings of Édouard Glissant, among others. Ostrander was a founding member of Tilting Axis, a platform for artists, curators and creatives from the greater Caribbean region (2014-2019). Ostrander served previously as the Director at the Museo Experimental El Eco (2009-2011) and Chief Curator at Museo Tamayo (2001-2009) both in Mexico City and Associate Curator of inSITE2000 in San Diego and Tijuana (1999-2001). He was a founding member of the inter-institutional Museum of Hub initiated by the New Museum (2007-2012). He has additionally held positions at XXIV Bienal de São Paulo, El Museo del Barrio and the Brooklyn Museum of Art.