



CASA/ESTUDIO NANCARROW O'GORMAN
CALZADA DE LAS ÁGUILAS 46,
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A Stubborn Man and a Hermit Walk into a Bar

For Immediate Release

- The collective exhibition *A Stubborn Man and a Hermit Walk into a Bar* reflects on isolation, resistance, hope, transition, and disappointment as manifestations of human construction (and destruction).
- Co-curated by CO,MA, Ana Pérez Escoto, and Joseph del Pesco, the exhibition will take place at the Casa/Estudio Nancarrow, designed by Juan O'Gorman in 1950.
- *A Stubborn Man and a Hermit Walk into a Bar* pays homage to the enduring friendship between Conlon Nancarrow and Juan O'Gorman, visionaries who were unafraid to face the consequences of adjusting their course and expressing their ideals.
- Participating Artists: ASMA, Aureliano Alvarado Faesler, Darío Acuña Fuentes-Berain, Michael Angelo Bala, Victor Barragán, Meriem Bennani, Lucas Cantú, Lenka Clayton & Phillip Andrew, Tomás Díaz Cedeño, Goulven Elies, Carolina Fusilier & Miko Revereza, Mario García Torres, Ximena Garrido-Lecca, Fritzia Irizar, Liza Lacroix, Carlos H. Matos, Conlon Nancarrow, Fernando Palma, Pedro Reyes, Rometti Costales, Julia Rometti, Juan O'Gorman, and Trimpin.
- The exhibition will be open to the public from February 6 to March 2, 2024.

As part of its off-site program, PEANA gallery presents the exhibition *A Stubborn Man and a Hermit Walk into a Bar*, co-curated by CO,MA (Mercedes Gómez), Ana Pérez Escoto, and Joseph del Pesco. This marks the third occasion in which PEANA presents a collective exhibition within a space representative of Mexican modernity.

For this show, 24 artists were invited to participate with a piece that could engage in a dialogue with the humanistic ideals that led to the creation of the historic Casa-Estudio Nancarrow, designed by O'Gorman in the late 1940s. The exhibition is arranged to create a natural tour of the different areas of the house, allowing the audience to discover Juan O'Gorman's architectural solutions tailored to Conlon Nancarrow's specific needs. These include a shaded terrace to contemplate the garden, a kitchen painted green (at the composer's request), a simple but welcoming room providing access to the important two-story library, a workshop, and a studio where Nancarrow spent most of his time working on compositions.

The invited artists' pieces are distributed throughout the house, coexisting with the specific space that frames them in various ways. These range from site-specific interventions to pieces reflecting on the composer's work and creative process. The Casa-Estudio Nancarrow bears witness to the intellect and friendship of two great thinkers who coincided in a historical moment and engaged in lengthy conversations about the era they lived in.



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Nancarrow settled in Mexico from 1933, escaping persecution in his native United States for his affiliation with the Communist Party. O'Gorman, on the other hand, had decided to retire from architecture as he believed it no longer served the social functions that interested him. It was with the construction of the Casa-Estudio Nancarrow that both artists revived their interest in reflecting on and providing solutions to the social problems brought about by modernity.

The exhibition's artists coexist with the ghosts that inhabit the house, reminding us that one can surrender, one can give up, but artistic production remains as the last hope for humanity. However intangible the effects of art may seem, a space like this must be remembered and recognized as a living example of the agency for change that art possesses. In the words of the German poet and playwright Bertolt Brecht, "Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it."

The exhibition's title, *A Stubborn Man and a Hermit Walk into a Bar*, refers to the personalities of both artists—the stubborn one (O'Gorman) insisting on modern architecture even after retiring from the profession, resuming it precisely with the Nancarrow house to continue his socialist ideas, and the hermit (Nancarrow) isolating himself from the world, finding in his compositions and musical experimentation the essence of humanity. Following the structure of a joke, the exhibition title is the first part where two personalities are juxtaposed, and what happens after that interaction is left to the audience's interpretation upon viewing the exhibition.

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