

RICARDO RENDÓN

Estados de relación

November 28, 2019 - January 11, 2020

Opening November, 28, 2019
6 – 8 pm



Employing traditional construction and industrial materials, such as wood, steel, wool felt and enamel paint, Ricardo Rendón (b. Mexico, 1970) methodically investigates how they interact with each other and their environment. Above all, he delves into how these materials can be transformed by means of a calculated artistic intervention. Thanks to this approach, over the years Rendón has created a body of work that distinguishes itself for both its intrinsic quality—the result of the artist’s material knowledge and skilled craftsmanship—and its intellectual and conceptual character.

Ricardo Rendón, Zona de concentración, 2018
Steelwire plumb, 170 x 150 cm

For all of his most recent works presented in the exhibition “Estados de relación” at the Galerie Wenger in Zurich, once more Rendón has confirmed the choice of grounding his artistic modus operandi in a haptic, manual practice. He has done so either by dispersing and literally reconfiguring the matter, or by reducing the use of matter to the minimum. With this double approach, the artist underscores the unity and correspondence of all matter—on the Earth and in the universe—its shared behavior and eternal transformation.

The notion of “contained emptiness” fittingly applies to some of Rendón’s projects, such as Patron de obra (2018), Area de corte (negro) (2019) and Papel de trabajo I (2018) which emphasize a process that can be described as a physically impossible dematerialization of the matter through the artistic gesture and the passing of time (Paula Braga). Like a sculptor carving into the marble to liberate the envisioned form from the stone still imprisoning it, Rendón cut into cotton paper or felt to free not only the shape but especially the void constituting these materials, keeping the debris of such a process as an integral part of the artwork, a subtle yet powerful reminder of the phenomenon described by the Law of conservation of matter: the mass of any object can never be created nor destroyed but only transformed and rearranged.

The second approach outlined above – i.e. Rendón’s almost minimalistic practice – builds the fundament for Somos Constelaciones (2019), a site-specific installation that reflects on the fact

that each and every physical body in our universe is affected by gravitation. Employing traditional construction tools such a brass plumb and pulleys inserted into the wall, Rendón capitalizes on the fundamental force discovered by Isaac Newton to keep the steel cable balanced and in tension in order to subdivide an empty black surface symbolizing a cosmic void and to achieve the creation of spatial and geometric objects resembling celestial bodies in a constellation. This work encapsulates Rendón's ambition, as he explains, to "establish a relation with the 'all,' with the stars and the constellations." (Interview with the artist, July 27, 2019).

A similar consideration is also at work in the series *Zona de concentración* (2018) and *Sistemas de atracción* (2019), which are generated and constantly modified by the interaction of the radically different materials they are made of—the masculine hard and cold iron, and the soft and more feminine colored felt—their specific weights, textures and how they differently respond to the force of gravity.

Rendón's work is an ongoing experiment on matter whose aim is to investigate the world, its scientific and mathematic foundations and how they have a practical influence on our life, perception and ways of seeing. In this sense, his motivation and purpose are not too dissimilar from those shared by many artists once affiliated with the Constructivist movement, the Bauhaus and Concrete art, such as El Lissitzky, László Moholy-Nagy, Josef Albers and Max Bill, all figures Rendón greatly admires and drives inspiration from. Like them, combining art, crafts and technology as well as mathematical observations and an overall interest for experimentation, Rendón exalts the qualities of the materials he works with and seeks beauty in reduction.

Dr. Valentina Locatelli