



What's in a name? Perhaps not the irony its wielders think. It took me some time to get behind Guccivuitton, a commercial gallery started and run by Miami artists Loriel Beltran, Domingo Castillo and Aramis Gutierrez. Coming out of the tradition of “performative” galleries—perhaps best represented in its most recent upswell by Reena Spaulings in New York—Guccivuitton is defined precisely by its indefinite character: it's both a market structure and a project to showcase artistic agency; both an antagonistic, tongue-in-cheek gesture and an engagement with commerce. Like most of these “performative” galleries, however, it seemed to me, when it opened its doors, that Guccivuitton confused capitulation with irony—a longer leash with the snatching back of permission and autonomy. So what prodded me to reconsider? I think it was the fact that beyond the illusory gesture of erecting a different kind of structure camouflaged inside enemy territory, Guccivuitton began a secret campaign against the smoke and mirrors of pseudo-parasitic criticality: it became a showcase for local material culture, for aesthetic expression that had to do with the living cultures of marginal neighborhoods and the work of non-professional artists incubated in strange circumstances. Guccivuitton takes the shape of a “performative” gallery, with all the pitfalls this entails, only to become a makeshift museum of material culture, of the popular production that often provides a foil to the dominant conditions and forces that are currently shaping the city. This is slowly becoming obvious, at least to me, as a list of “out-of-place” exhibitions, slotted between the expected showings of post-Internet artists and neo-formalist painters, begins to swell. On this

Founded in the Little Haiti neighbourhood of Miami in 2013, Guccivuitton is an artist-run gallery run by Loriel Beltran, Domingo Castillo and Aramis Gutierrez.

ICA Miami is currently hosting an exhibition of Guccivuitton from May 14 - September 25. On view at Guccivuitton through June 6 is “Agency,” a solo show by Cristina Lei Rodriguez.

Gean Moreno is an artist and writer and the artistic director of Cannonball, a non-profit arts organization based in downtown Miami.



Guccivuitton's co-founder Aramis Gutierrez is one of the artists invited to take part in this summer's Kaleidoscope Instagram Residency program. Follow his posts at [instagram.com/kaleidoscopemagazine](https://www.instagram.com/kaleidoscopemagazine).

list one can place shows dedicated to the Florida Highwaymen, outsider artist Purvis Young and the ceramics of architect Chayo Frank. Here, difference in relation to the status quo emerges not in the structure of the space or the intentions behind it, but in a concrete practice that binds it to other spaces and other forces—namely, to those of a popular sphere palpating with the potential to cut through the sameness that suffuses contemporary art and its institutions from one end to the other.

So what does the invitation to exhibit Guccivuitton at the ICA Miami, the city's newest institutional space, itself negotiating a place in the local ecology, mean? It provides a good opportunity, I think, for Guccivuitton to decide on a course—a decision which may impinge on the very shape that ICA Miami is crafting for itself.

Exhibiting in the ICA's Atrium gallery, Guccivuitton has developed, along with Jonathan Gonzalez of the design firm Office GA, a series of mesh panels and racks that will break the structure into discrete showroom cubes. Inside the cubes, the gallery will place its entire inventory, generating an anthological group show with all the individuals it has ever worked with, collapsing distinctions. The unfolding of the show will be shadowed by the irony that while everything will be for sale during the exhibition, the showroom cubes themselves are impenetrable. They will be suspended in space, behind glass and mesh, as if aching to leave their materiality behind, to return to the digital animations they started as, to become almost-disembodied diagrams of the contradictions of cultural production, sadly emancipated from any program of social reconfiguration. ◉

“A MAKESHIFT MUSEUM OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN MIAMI THAT INCUBATES NON-PROFESSIONAL AESTHETIC EXPRESSION”