

ANA MERCEDES HOYOS : ATMÓSFERAS

March 21st, 2024

Leon Tovar Gallery, 26 E 64th St, 2nd Floor, New York



Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas



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Oil on canvas

Leon Tovar Gallery proudly presents *Atmósferas*, an exceptionally unique series by Colombian artist Ana Mercedes Hoyos, exhibited in its entirety in New York City for the first time. While Hoyos has had several exhibitions in the city featuring her celebrated *Bodegones de Palenque* series, her abstract periods from her *Window* and *Atmósferas* series have been rarely seen here. Only one piece from *Atmósferas* was previously included in the group exhibition 'Artistic License: Six Takes on the Guggenheim Collection', though notably, the Guggenheim's permanent collection houses two pieces from this series.

This presentation debuts *Atmósferas* as a complete body of work in New York City and marks Hoyos's return to Leon Tovar Gallery since our 1994 Bogotá showcase. Concurrently, the painting "*Proyecto para Venta*" (1976) from Hoyos' *Windows* series will be featured in MoMA's "Crafting Modernity: Design in Latin America, 1940-1980" exhibition, further underscoring the importance of this long-overdue presentation.



Atmósfera, 1978, Oil on canvas, 145 x 290 cm

Diverging from her previous oeuvre, "Hoyo's *Atmósferas* are among the most daring and, at the same time, the most poetic works of contemporary Colombian art."¹ These visionary paintings forge an unprecedented relationship with the viewer's gaze, intermittently obstructing and absorbing the eye through luminous emptiness - a push-and-pull dynamic that sets the *Atmósferas* apart.

This exhibition demands focused contemplation as viewers attune themselves to Hoyos's masterful capture of subtle nuances in light, color, and atmospheric depth on canvas. The *Atmósferas* challenge perception itself, blurring the boundaries between presence and absence, painting, and experience. Drawing inspiration from artists like Albers, Magritte, and Rothko, Hoyos filtered their influences through the lens of her Bogotá surroundings:

*"Colombia's capital reconciles the closed with the open, the restricted with the vast, the interrupted with the infinite... it imposes on us the almost irreducible destiny of looking inwards and yet, at the same time, outwards... Ana Mercedes Hoyos will retain in her work a factor that is an inseparable part of it: the Bogotá of her daily life, precise and ambiguous, earthy and aerial, straight and rounded, with its clear horizon and enveloping atmosphere."*² *"Within that region is Bogotá, within Bogotá is Ana Mercedes, within Ana Mercedes, is the vision that brings us back to Bogotá through her painting."*³

But why white? Because it irradiates light and Ana Mercedes Hoyos pursued light itself, made evident in the painting *Atmósfera*, 1978. As Angel Kalenberg observes:

¹ Serrano, Eduardo. *Atmósferas*, Bogotá, 1999.

² Serrano, Eduardo. *Atmósferas*, Bogotá, 1999.

³ Pontual, Roberto. From *Within Towards Without*, Rio de Janeiro, 1978.

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"She superimposes layers of color, completely covering one with the next successively. On a white layer she places a yellow one, then a blue, and then another white... From this superimposing there emerge pictures that from a distance appear to be totally white, but in which one can detect, as one approaches, an archeology of blues, mauves, reds and yellows. She is in search of infinity in depth, not in extent. She traces a line towards the light, focuses on the light."⁴

The sole reference amidst Hoyos's immense, delirious display of chromatics is sometimes a barely insinuated horizontal line, a kind of guide through her nuanced compositions. She transcended the canvas's confines through full-bleed paint and color washes, evoking a sense of vastness. Simultaneously, her use of squared frames evocative of architectural plans, act as boundaries that define the distinction between the outer painted realm and the viewer's position in relation to it. Her masterful techniques orchestrate a dialogue between geometry and atmosphere, intuition, and structure.

What makes *Atmósferas* so profoundly compelling is its historically significant, radically abstract approach combined with the exceedingly rare nature of these works. This exhibition offers an unprecedented opportunity to experience her pioneering exploration into the boundaries of perception, reality, and illusion. In immersing viewers in transcendent experiences of light, color, and infinite atmospheric depth, *Atmósferas* prompts a heightened awareness of our own relationship to art and the very act of seeing. This crowning achievement solidifies Hoyos' legacy as one of the most visionary artists of her time - her atmospheric realms will continue to challenge, provoke, and inspire for generations to come.

For additional information, please contact us at info@leontovargallery.com

⁴ Kalenberg, Angel. The Wild Window, La Galeria Buenos Aires, Montevideo, 1979

Ana Mercedes Hoyos, born in 1942 in Bogotá, is renowned as one of the most innovative painters of 20th-century Latin America. She employed a meticulous, series-based approach, thoroughly exploring each body of work's unique elements while seamlessly transitioning between inspirations, always maintaining her essential artistic vision. She developed a distinctive style characterized by precise geometry and a profound exploration of color. Her series *Atmósferas* (1978) captures the psychological and geographical landscape of Bogotá, inviting contemplation and evoking feelings of solitude and mystery. Hoyos' work offers a unique perspective on the world, translating complex emotions into visually captivating compositions.

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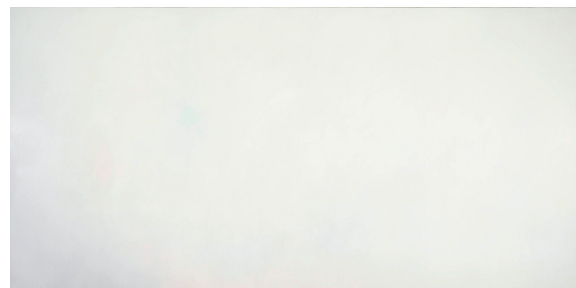
Salto de Tequendama, 1979
Ensamblaje
60 x 60 cm
23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in



Window, c. 1970's
Oil on canvas
88.9 x 88.9 cm
35 x 35 in



Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas
145 x 290 cm
57 1/8 x 114 1/8 in



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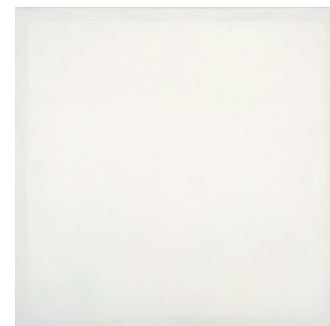
Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas
120 x 120 cm
47 1/4 x 47 1/4 in



Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas
60 x 60 cm
23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in



Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas
120 x 120 cm
47 1/4 x 47 1/4 in



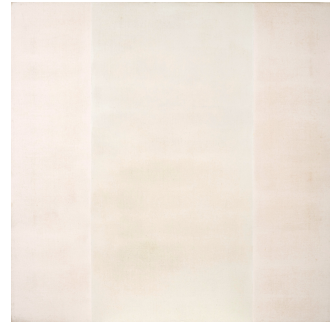
Un muro, 1978
Oil on canvas
60 x 60 cm
23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in



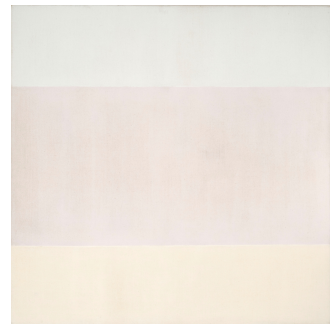
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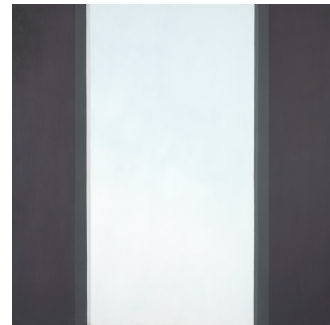
Atmósfera, 1976
Oil on canvas
90 x 90 cm
35 3/8 x 35 3/8 in



Atmósfera, 1976
Oil on canvas
90 x 90 cm
35 3/8 x 35 3/8 in



Un muro, 1978
Oil on canvas
90 x 90 cm
35 3/8 x 35 3/8 in



Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas
40 x 40 cm
15 3/4 x 15 3/4 in



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Atmósfera, 1978
Oil on canvas
120 x 120 cm
47 1/4 x 47 1/4 in

