

Sánchez's meticulously hand-crafted works masquerade as machine-made digital prints, while they defy conventional classifications as paintings, sculptures or installations. Characterised by an uncannily 'familiar' air, they lead us down a path of visual and art historical references that appeal to our memory: geometric abstract compositions evoke Concrete Art, the minimalists or even Op, suggesting a long trail of leitmotifs and longstanding research into formal languages; meanwhile, the colours, the fonts and their industrial appearance relay fragments of commercial and popular culture.

In her recent solo exhibition *Grotesque Bold Condensed* (Garúa, Lima, 2016), Sánchez drew inspiration from Theo Van Doesburg's and Kurt Schwitters' *The Scarecrow Fairy Tale* (Die Scheuche Märchen). With a distinct Dada ethos, the typographic book sought to inspire children to deconstruct their visual vocabularies in order to produce something new – the Hegelian act of creative destruction. Using industrial packaging and covering materials, Sánchez's works dissect meaning from systems of communication, in this case distorting the imagery found in Van Doesburg's and Schwitters' book. For example, in the work *X, el espantapajaros* (2016) a rubber black cross is displayed lying deflated across two plaster steps. While the anthropomorphic cross in *The Scarecrow Fairy Tale* stands for a scarecrow and appears upright and dynamic, Sánchez renders hers in three dimensions, and casts it on the floor. The now flaccid X, has gone from being a scarecrow, to a character on a page, to a moribund symbol that she deconstructed further.

Such semiotic evolutions stretch further with *Park* - a work comprised of ten sheets of industrial aluminium covered in multiple layers of acrylic paint hung on a white wall above a black rubber speech bubble on the ground. The font, the colours and the poster-like quality of the aluminium foil pieces recall well-known, pervasive and proliferating advertising campaigns. Each one is truncated, censored by the artist's act of cropping: a defiant or iconoclastic gesture that neutralises both their branding and social meaning.

The source images the aluminium works are based on belong to gallery or museum advertisements found in prominent art magazines, providing crucial clues that unlock the work's intent. Sánchez replicates the fonts and colours of these recognisable ads, which tease the memory of an attentive viewer. She recognizes how promotion strategies aim at becoming 'familiar,' and by appropriating their aesthetic she sabotages the mechanism by which these infiltrate the aesthetic sensibilities of audiences.

*X, el espantapajaros* demonstrates how Sánchez harnessed Van Doesburg and Schwitters' interest in creative destruction by continuing the process of transformation imposed onto the X, which from a scarecrow turns into a rubber castaway. Conversely, *Park* reveals the artist's struggle to interject into the progress of symbols. Processes of marketing, in fact, transform mere tools of communication into triggers of memory and recognition. Her banners hijack the mnemonic resonances invoked by brands by counterfeiting their aesthetic, though leaving the message unclear. The few discernible words, 'park,' 'paper,' 'by,' underscore expanded tropes in art discourse perhaps relating respectively to public space, medium, or authorship. Like pieces of a deconstructed puzzle, she leaves the viewer with the task to reformulate his/her language.

The interpretative framework outlined so far traces the artist's roots into historic avant-gardes: the pillars of so-called canonical art history. Yet, a closer look at the art history of South American and

specifically Peru, where Sánchez was born and formed as an artist until her relocation to London and further study at Goldsmiths, inspires additional and necessary connections. Her engagement with mediated imagery and typefaces, for example, builds on the longstanding legacy of artists invested in deconstructing the effects of modern modes of communication on subjectivity in numerous contexts. Among these, Mira Schendel – another important reference for Sánchez - used letterset compulsively in her *Monotipias* (1964-1965), creating simultaneously fragile and industrial artefacts. In Lima, Jesús Ruiz Durand shortly worked for Juan Velasco's Revolutionary Government to produce agrarian reform campaign posters - visually associated to International Pop art – to rally support among the rural populations. In these posters he appropriated advertising strategies to subtly promote political agendas. These are but two instances that begin to locate Sánchez's practice within wider continental narratives, which urgently demand further exploration.

*Park*, as one of the latest examples of Sánchez's pointed practice, provides a crucial departure point to assess how branding and the mass media destabilize or enforce societal structures. Since the 1960s marketing and advertising have remained a contested site of confrontation between state authority, manipulation and freedom. By rerouting the familiar ease earned by museums' or galleries' publicity to her own visual vocabulary, Sánchez neutralizes institutionalized aesthetics and makes them her own. Confronted with such deconstructed imagery, the viewer is empowered to decipher them, and to decide what 'familiar' means on his/her own terms.