

De la Torre Brothers: Baroque glass and border myths make New York debut



Einar and Jamex de la Torre, *Chimerame*, 2023, Blown glass, water jet cut aluminum, 34 x 23 x 8 in, 86.4 x 58.4 x 20.3 cm

NEW YORK, NY.- Ruiz-Healy Art is presenting de la Torre Brothers: *Psychopomp*, marking the brothers' second solo exhibition with the gallery and their first in New York City. The exhibition is on view from May 12 to August 14, 2026. "Psychopomp" literally means the 'guide of souls' for a spiritual guide who leads souls on their journey to the afterlife. The de la Torre Brothers create elaborate, mixed-media glass sculptures and lenticular prints, utilizing the concept of the psychopomp to explore themes of cultural transience. Their Baroque-inspired creatures create visually dense narratives that reflect on "high" versus "low" art, diasporic experiences, and social class stratification through humorous world-building.

Brothers Einar and Jamex de la Torre, born in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1963 and 1960, respectively, moved to California in 1972. They have collaborated since the 1990s, developing a signature style that combines mixed media and blown-glass sculpture. Now living and working on both sides of the border, their art weaves references to ancient Mexican mythology, Chicano culture, and American life, among a broad range of other influences.

Through their Baroque aesthetic and multicultural references, the artists explore themes of identity and contemporary consumerism by incorporating carefully selected objects sourced from thrift and antique stores. The exhibition utilizes a maximalist Baroque aesthetic to investigate the intersections of identity and modern consumer culture. By integrating a curated selection of found objects—from dice and cameo jewelry to mahjong tiles—the artists employ an additive layering technique that invites multifaceted interpretations. Drawing inspiration from the emotive power of German Expressionism, the pieces in *Psychopomp* navigate the boundaries between the sacred and the profane, offering a guide through the diverse and overlapping paths of human experience.

The brothers use humor and wit, evident in many of their works, to explore themes of human overconsumption and environmental issues. Harkening to Dr. Seuss' fable of the Lorax, their piece *Lorax Salute* portrays the de la Torre's version of the speaker for the trees. Their reimagined Lorax urges viewers to reflect on the weight of humanity's modern footprint, evolving from a playful cartoon character into a more grotesque figure, angry and frustrated with the state of the world.

At the heart of the exhibit is the titular psychopomp, the *Coyote de Almas*, a reference to 'coyotes', a nickname for those who help migrants cross the southern U.S. border safely.

Standing four feet tall, this figure exudes vibrant character, adorned with a crown of cacti and holding a staff, with a lamb

resting protectively under his arm. The role of a spirit guide is common in the myths of many ancient cultures surrounding death and the beyond. Just as souls seek peace, so do many people in life. "We marveled at how many cultures have this kind of

'usher' deity to guide us from this world to the next dimension. Usually, there is a symbolic 'crossing' of a river or bridge - a point of no return. We have melded the deity as a kind of Nahual or 'spirit animal' that is linked to our own corporal-animal existence," says Einar de la Torre.

The works in Psychopomp blend cultural and national influences, reflecting the diverse inspirations behind the brothers' creative process. Myths and folklore permeate many of their works, such as Brave Heart, where decorative spokes encircle a central figure, reminiscent of the Stone of the Sun from the Aztec calendar. At the center, a grimacing heart with four limbs extends outward, one hand holding a blade. The Brave Heart bears its teeth and raises its arm as a warrior preparing for battle, ready to protect the world that it bleeds for.

Through their evocative combination of mythology and contemporary commentary, Einar and Jamex de la Torre invite viewers to confront the complexities of heritage and the urgent social challenges facing our world today. This exhibition serves as both a celebration of culture and a call to reflect, urging us to recognize the sacred and the profane, the opulent and the ordinary, and our shared responsibility for the future.

Einar and Jamex de la Torre were born in Guadalajara, México, in 1963 and 1960. In a sudden family move, the brothers relocated to the United States in 1972, leaving a traditional Catholic school for a small California beach town. They both attended California State University, Long Beach. Jamex received his BFA in Sculpture in 1983, while Einar decided against pursuing an art degree. The brothers live and work on both sides of the border, the Guadalupe Valley in Baja California, México, and San Diego, California. They have won the USA Artists Fellowship award, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award, and the San Diego Art Prize. They have had 18 solo museum exhibitions, completed eight major public art projects, and participated in 4 biennales. Recently, their work has been the subject of solo exhibitions such as Upward Mobility, held at the McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, Texas, and their recent traveling exhibition and accompanying book, Collidoscope: de la Torre Brothers Retro-Perspective has been held at museums such as the Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK; Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY; Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA, among others. They have been featured and reviewed in publications such as The New York Times, Artnews, and Glasstire.