

## HENRY ART GALLERY TO PRESENT EKTOR GARCIA: MATÉRIA PRIMA

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ektor garcia: matéria prima  
April 2 – September 4, 2022



ektor garcia, *portal I* (detail), 2019. Copper, leather. Courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto.

Across his artistic practice, ektor garcia (b. 1985, Red Bluff, California) challenges the hierarchies of gendered and racialized labor, combining a queer punk sensibility with the handcraft traditions of Mexico, his ancestral homeland.

In textiles, ceramics, and metalwork, frequently in combination with found materials, garcia engages vernacular and craft practices historically cast in diminutive or marginalized roles, ascribing renewed value through intimate, repetitive processes. The resulting objects are hybrid in nature—both malleable and solid, dense and porous, sharp and tender—evoking the body and its labor as a source of pleasure and pain, rupture and healing. Pieces are often reconfigured; textiles are made and unmade. Undoing the knots is as important as reknitting to find new points of connection and possibility.

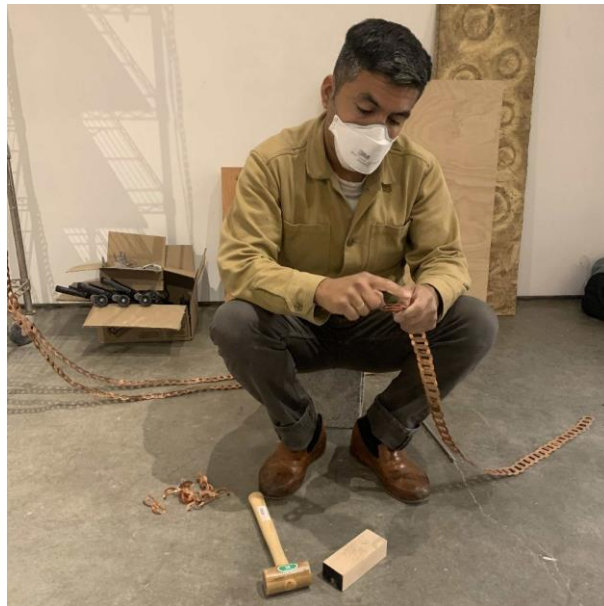
For his exhibition at the Henry, garcia worked with faculty, staff, and students at the University of Washington's Ceramic and Metal Arts Building to create a series of linked-chain sculptures made in ceramic, copper, and glass. Comprised of individual, interlocking links, these chains form a series of mutual and contingent relationships across their

constitutive parts. Each link varies slightly and holds the memory of hands touching materials. The title of the exhibition, *matéria prima*, is a play on words that references garcia's process: *matéria prima* (raw material) also includes the Spanish word *prima* (cousin). This double meaning reflects both the generative potential of garcia's cumulative process and the relational affinities across materials and maker.

Organized in variable permutations dependent on the space, garcia's installations are an accumulation of objects, disrupting spatial hierarchies with sculptures sprawled across floors and dispersed throughout the supporting architecture. At the Henry, butterflies made of crocheted copper wire escape the confines of the gallery and inhabit interstitial spaces of the museum, directing visitors' attention to less assuming locations within the building. A recurring motif across garcia's work, the butterfly is a potent symbol of transformation and migration, and for garcia, also alludes to the derogatory, Spanish term for gay men used in Mexico *mariposa* (butterfly). In his hands, garcia reclaims this symbol. In a gesture emblematic of his larger practice, he recoups the socially devalued through acts of ritual care.

A complimentary publication will accompany the exhibition.

## About the Artist



ektor garcia at the University of Washington's Ceramic & Metal Arts Building. Photo: Sophia Marciniak.

ektor garcia earned a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from Columbia University. He has complete residencies at Progetto, Puglia, Italy; International Studio and Curatorial Program, New York; Cove Park, Argyll and Bute, Scotland; and Ox-Bow, Saugatuck, Michigan. garcia has held solo exhibition at the Sculpture

Center, New York; and Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany, among others. His work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including at the Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art, China; New Museum, New York; El Museo del Barrio, New York; and Prospect, New Orleans.

## Artist Fellowship Program

ektor garcia is a participating artist in the Henry's Artist Fellowship Program, which is intended to advance artistic inquiry through the mutual exchange between invited artists and the larger University of Washington community. It is designed as a generative program that promotes dynamic collaboration and facilitates artistic development, aligning the Henry's commitment to innovation and inquiry with the University's standing as a leader in research. The 2022 pilot year of the Artist Fellowship Program is made possible by the Jones Endowed Fund for the Arts.

*ektor garcia: matéria prima* is organized by Nina Bozicnik, Curator, and supported in part by a generous gift from Lee Rhodes and Peter Seligmann. New work created by garcia as part of the Henry Artist Fellowship Program was funded through a grant from the Jones Endowed Fund for the Arts.

## ABOUT THE HENRY

The Henry Art Gallery is internationally recognized for bold and challenging exhibitions, for being the first to premiere new works by established and emerging artists, and for highlighting contemporary art practice through a roster of multidisciplinary programs. Containing more than 27,000 works of art, the museum's permanent collection is a significant cultural resource available to scholars, researchers, and the general public. The Henry is located on the University of Washington campus in Seattle, Washington. Visit [henryart.org](http://henryart.org) to learn more.

Henry Art Gallery  
University of Washington

### PHYSICAL ADDRESS

[15th Avenue NE + NE 41st Street](#)  
Seattle, WA 98195

### MAILING ADDRESS

Henry Art Gallery  
University of Washington  
Box 351410  
Seattle, WA 98195

### MUSEUM HOURS

Thursday: 10 AM – 7 PM  
Friday – Sunday: 10 AM – 5 PM

### ADMISSION

General Admission: \$0-20 suggested donation  
Free for Henry members, UW faculty and staff, children and students  
Free on first Thursdays

### INFORMATION

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