

TIME CAPSULE MMXV

*Photographs and metaphors for modern times,
by Isabel Sierra y Gómez de León*

The Fitzrovia Gallery is proud to present Time Capsule, a solo-show of works by London-based Spanish artist Isabel Sierra y Gómez de León, organised in collaboration with and curated by Spanish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN).

With a background in advertising and media, Sierra creates work that deals with the relationship between language, visual representation and populist imagination. Her artistic practice during recent years has centred on contemporary mythology, undermining the impact of the rapidly evolving technology on the individual's approach to earlier seemingly sacred phenomena, such as mortality and identity. The subjects of her photographs – mostly still lives – turn into metaphors for conditions that we have created but ultimately are under the control of.

In the face of their acute relevance to the twenty-first century, Sierra's work is greatly influenced by Spanish and Dutch Baroque, distinguished by its use of mundane objects in politically satirical paintings. And were it not for their glossy surfaces, her pictures could very well be the work of a seventeenth-century master. Compositionally and content-wise the digital prints appear neutral, by all means decorative, but subjected to the imagination of the viewer meanings start to take form. Calico, a still life of two vases with a cut flower in each, set against a pitch black background, is titled after Calico Lab, a Google-funded research company using advanced technology to improve our understanding of the biological lifespan. The two cut flowers, one dying and one sprouting, suggest the implications on nature, in the form of artificial life, inflicted by technology. Also from Time Capsule, CLOVD II is a direct reference to Google Cloud, a platform for storing and sharing personal information. Here, a glossy red apple under a glass cupola on a shelf, presented in sharp contrast to a collection of organic, root vegetables seen below, functions as a metaphor for the immortal and perfected identities we create in the digital world.

Sierra was born in 1985 in Seville, Spain, and lives and works in London since 2009. Her work has been exhibited in Spain, Berlin and London, and Time Capsule is her first solo-show in the UK. The series, comprised of ten Giclee prints on archive Hahnemuhle paper, developed over 2013 and 2014 and, premiering at CASA//ARTE 2013, earned the artist the OneShot Hotels award. The full series was exhibited at Galeria Sanchez de Lamadrid, Seville, in 2014. An interactive installation piece has been created exclusively for The Fitzrovia Gallery and will be on display for the duration of the show. Influenced by Sir David Attenborough's BBC documentary The Amber Time Machine, visitors are invited to rearrange objects or even eat fruit laid out on a table. The installation will be documented twice every day and posted on the artist's blog.

The exhibition is the third at The Fitzrovia Gallery and the fifth in London, bringing Spanish contemporary artists to a UK-audience, organised by SCAN in 2015.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Massimo Banzi, founder of Arduino and a key-player in developing the hardware used for digital devices capable of sensing and controlling the physical world, describes his creation as the most crucial invention made by mankind since Johannes Gutenberg's printing press in 1440. Technological advance is happening at an overwhelming speed in our times – Google Glass, 3D printing, Smart everything... We live in era of permanent change and constant revolutions, unprecedented in both velocity and force. Soon, a future previously only imagined in Science Fiction will be our reality. Eventually surpassing the speed of light, we will invent the problems called for by the resolutions already existent.

In Time Capsule I return to the methodology of metaphors, first explored for the series Logotypes (2012), a series of eight allegorical portraits of political leaders, as part of a quest to finally grasp the full nature of the culture of technology that even I, a child of the 80s, struggle to comprehend. Inspired by prehistoric civilisations' use of mythology for bringing clarity to their convictions and views, I appropriate familiar characteristics from classic Western art to examine the real impact of recent technological inventions on our society. My artistic practice is thus rooted in a primitive culture, allowing for superstition to guide our unravelling of the obscure and indeterminate. Dealing with the unknown and yet to be defined, my works never impose a truth on their viewers. Rather, they invite to imagine.

As with Logotypes, the viewer is in charge of filling in the gaps and defining its implications. With Time Capsule I took this relationship to another level as I allowed for the individual images to be expressions of my immediate fears and vulnerabilities, swivelling between neo-luddite and humanely curious.

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timecapsulemmxv.tumblr.com
fitzroviagallery.co.uk
scan-arte.com



3D Printing, 2013
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Bitcoin, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Calico, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



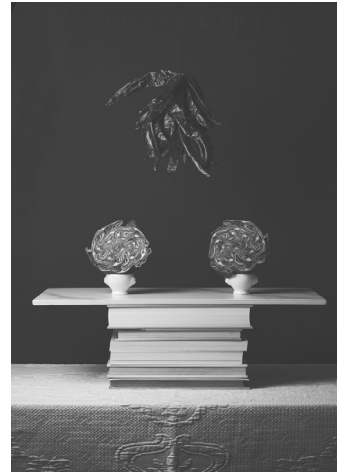
CLOVD I, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



CLOVD II, 2013
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



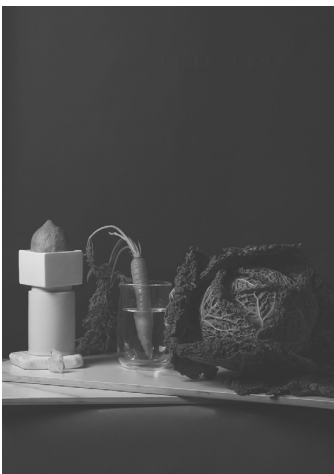
Google Glass, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Javascript, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Snapchat, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Tinder, 2013
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Time line, 2014
50x70cm
Ed. 5 + PA
£375.00
£475.00 (framed)



Time Capsule, 2014
100x70cm
Ed. 1/5 (only one available for sale)
Silent auction (piece includes frame on display)
Starting price: £150.00

**All prices, exc. VAT*