

GAVLAK

Andy Campbell, "Critics' Picks: Los Super Elegantes," *Artforum*, October 12, 2017

ARTFORUM

Critic's Picks Los Angeles Los Super Elegantes



Is now the right time to historicize the aughts? Milena Muzquiz and Martiniano Lopez-Crozet, who began releasing music together as Los Super Elegantes in 2001, were darlings of the art world then; they appeared numerous times in these pages (both on the Web and in print), usually in the context of extravagant parties. But their practice was weightier than all that might imply. Muzquiz, who is from Tijuana, and Lopez-Crozet, who was born in Buenos Aires, started their act in San Francisco, performing up and down the West Coast in a style that mixed improvisatory theater, performance art, and rock-star shenanigans. The duo made confounding, earworm pop at a moment when executives in the record industry were seemingly wringing their hands (but secretly filling their pockets) over the “crossover” successes of Latin American singers such as Ricky Martin and Shakira.

It is time to consider their practice anew. Since they stopped producing music (their last album came out in 2009), the two have lain low, exploring their own areas of interest—ceramics for Muzquiz and leather footwear for Lopez-Crozet. Evidence of these efforts is brought together in a stage-cum-catwalk that served as a platform for an opening-night performance. Eucalyptus, bubble wrap, a mop head, and a wine bottle, among other objects, hang above the set in delicate balance (Calder Mobile by Los Super Elegantes, 2017), and on a nearby wall Lopez-Crozet’s shoes are placed around Muzquiz’s glazed ceramic sculpture of hands (Decorating with Dogs, 2017). In the opening performance’s climax, Los Super Elegantes expressionistically painted a blank canvas and the surrounding wall, all to a pulsing dance beat. It was a parody of a parody of what many believe the creative process to be—and, if we’re to look back with a gimlet eye, maybe it always was.