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Gisela Colon: *Meta Minimal*

January 11, 2020 – March 7, 2020

Opening Reception: Saturday, January 11, 2020, 4-6pm

Artist Walkthrough & Conversation: Saturday, February 15, 2020

GAVLAK Los Angeles is pleased to announce *Meta Minimal*, a solo exhibition of new sculpture by Gisela Colon (American b. 1966, Vancouver, Canada; raised 1967, San Juan, Puerto Rico). The artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery will open at Gavlak's new space in Downtown Los Angeles at 1700 South Santa Fe Avenue, Suite 440, on January 11, 2020.

Through her syncretic process of exploring and expanding upon past history, sculptor Gisela Colon has succeeded in creating sculptures that convey the fullest possible array of sensory and intellectual experience, projecting cosmic energy and power outwards into the world. With her astute practice of *Organic Minimalism*— an idiosyncratic sculptural language that imbues life-like qualities into reductive forms— Colon approaches her sculptural practice from the expansive perspective of phenomenological concerns: addressing the physical laws of the universe such as gravity, time, movement, energy and transformation. Colon's oeuvre is the result of a synthesis of pointed historical reflection and visceral raw energy.

Colon's practice of *Organic Minimalism* simultaneously expands and challenges the legacies of Light and Space, Minimalism, Kinetic and Latin American Op Art, merging industrial inertness with transformative biological mutability. Her sensual, gender-ambiguous sculptural forms further connect her practice to a history of female artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Yayoi Kusama, Linda Benglis and Judy Chicago. By channeling Bourgeois' notions of sexualized energies and Chicago's nascent feminist atmospheric works, Colon similarly posits her sculptures as vehicles for conversion of classic masculine forms into feminized power.

Colon's vocabulary of organic forms and humanized geometries embodies a feeling of energy, movement, and growth that stems from the artist's connection to the Earth, the vital energy that pervades all living organisms, and the extensive, infinite forces that rule the cosmological realm. For Colon, what is most important in a work of art is that it “transcends the material to allow for metaphysical phenomena.”

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A merger of scientifically advanced technologies and materials with naturally-occurring *in vita* properties places Colon squarely in the current international discourse of contemporary sculpture. Contemporaries such as Olafur Eliasson, Alicja Kwade, Jose Davila, and other practitioners, alongside Colon, integrate the use of ubiquitous industrial materials of the Anthropocene era with the palpable tension of the laws of physics that pervade the invisible world around us.

For the *Meta Minimal* exhibition, Colon's works will occupy the entirety of the gallery, centering the installation on one of Colon's signature large-scale aerospace *Monoliths*, sculpted in iridescent carbon fiber. At 12 feet tall, Colon's *Untitled (Projectile Monolith White Iridium)*, 2019, stands as a force of gravity around which all other sculptures effortlessly float in synergistic movement. In Colon's words:

"The *Monoliths* convey evidence of equality, power, beauty, and strength. By appropriating classic masculine forms and symbols (the phallus, bullets, missiles, rockets) and making them aesthetically ambiguous and even beautiful, the *Monolith* sculptures subvert the traditionally aggressive and destructive references of these objects. Their negative meanings are transmuted into positive energies, by converting them into aesthetically desirable objects that address phenomenology and the universal concern of human relationships with the Earth."

Interspersed throughout the gallery, the viewer will also encounter a series of translucent, refined *Hyperbolic Monoliths*, part of a new body of work entitled *Unidentified Objects*, which references cosmological origins and otherworldly enigmas. Like stalagmites forcefully growing upwards from the mineral earth, or foreign matter hailing inexplicably from unknown worlds, the 8-foot-tall streamlined *Hyperbolic Monoliths* act as sinewy reminders of our stardust origins, creating bodily experiences through the activation of surrounding space.

Surrounding the *Monoliths*, several wall sculptures from Colon's groundbreaking series of biomorphic *Pods* will hover as beacons of light and life. The *Pods* are created through a unique fabrication method comprised of blow-molding and layering of acrylic and optical materials of the 21st century. This technique results in sculptures that emanate, refract, and reflect light while simultaneously possessing fluid spectral color and optical harmony. Activated by light and their surrounding environment, the *Pods* become perceptual objects whose physical

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characteristics are transformed by variable factors such as the position of the viewer, their source of light, and the time of day.

Anchoring the central gallery space, Colon's large-scale 8-foot-long amorphous floor work, entitled *Unidentified Object (Slaboid Incandescent Gold)*, 2020, protrudes from the floor as if growing out of the concrete, presenting a direct aesthetic counterpoint in both organic form and manifested purpose to the forceful verticality of the Monoliths. These objects, though apparently conceptually opposed, emanate from the same transformative world, sharing a primitive kinship with the fundamental aspects of life.

Extending into the east gallery space, Colon presents a subtle immersive installation with a series of *Light Portals* where highly refined linear swaths of light and color appear to float seamlessly on the wall. Through the elusive shifting of prismatic refractions of structural color, the disembodied *Light Portals* allow for glimpses into the infinite.

Presented together, all four bodies of Colon's work, foster a symbiotic dialogue, evoking the physical states of matter that fluctuate between solid, liquid and gas. *Meta Minimal* evidences a dynamic encounter with the universal forces of energy that surround us, leading to an experience beyond perception – an encounter with the sublime.

Gisela Colon's work is in the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD), San Diego, CA; Perez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), Miami, FL; Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA; Grand Rapids Museum of Art (GRAM), Grand Rapids, MI; and the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Sedalia, MO, amongst others. Colon's work was recently on view in 2019 in the exhibition *Crystals in Art: Ancient to Today*, at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas. Upcoming institutional exhibitions include *Perception Shift: New Approaches to Light, Color, and Space in Contemporary Art* at the Mint Museum, North Carolina (2020); and the traveling exhibition *Light, Space, Surface: Southern California Art From LACMA's Collection* at the Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN (2021); Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts (2021-2022); and The Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida (2022). Colon lives and works in Los Angeles.

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Meta Minimal will be on view through March 7, 2020 at GAVLAK Los Angeles, 1700 South Santa Fe Avenue, Suite 440, Los Angeles, CA. For more information concerning the exhibition, or press inquiries, please contact Sarah Lewiecki at slewiecki@gavlakgallery.com, or (323) 467-5700.