



Lucia Hierro

May 8th–11th, 2025

Spring Studios, New York

Swivel Gallery is pleased to present a solo presentation of Lucia Hierro in this year's edition of Independent. Hierro's practice, which includes sculpture, digital media, and installation, confronts twenty-first century capitalism through an intersectional lens. Appropriating imagery that ranges from commerce to art history, Hierro's choices manifest her own multidimensional experience as a Dominican American artist raised in Washington Heights. With a studio methodology steeped in Pop Art, Minimalism, Conceptual Art, and European still life painting, as well as her own biographical circumstance, Hierro's work surveys power, individuality, and opportunity specific to the communities she orbits.

Lifting visual matter off the street and media outlets, Hierro expresses subjective storylines that speak to the elasticity of identity—a symptom of our hyperkinetic present. Featuring a body of work composed of Hierro's distinctive past series, the Mercado (Market), and the debut of the Gates from 2021, the artist uses scale as a primary preoccupation and a predominant feature of this presentation. The Mercado sculptures are composed out of Poly Organdy fabrics, felt, and hard-celled foam, and sewn with the assistance of the artist's mother. See-through and life-sized, they impersonate the ubiquitous tote and bodega bags that saturate our urban landscape. Stuffed with digitally printed objects—popular Dominican foods, trendy merchandise, cultural souvenirs, and collectibles—each bag embodies an individualized storyline that intersects race, class, and gender.

Representing the concept of *simulacrum*, meaning an image or representation of someone or something, the works act as the thing, in a larger-scale. Alluding to the ever-lasting reality of economics, and the way people live their lives in a sea of uncertainty and debt, when, in fact, larger systems and structures are talked about theoretically-but never in terms of their direct impact on people, or the fact that so much of our culture is manufactured and branded conceptually drives the materialization of Hierro's visual language.

Formed of *chicharrones*, corn chips, Takis, and *platanitos* organized neatly by variety and hanging eight feet high on massive, primary-colored, chip clip strips, Hierro's *Rack* works make a playful nod to Donald Judd's *Stack*. In 1965, Judd coined the term "specific object" in an essay of the same name to call attention to pre-established relationships between viewers and "forms." Through the artist, the object becomes autonomous since its impact on viewers cannot be entirely controlled. There is a certain amount of manipulation and intervention on Hierro's part. When she repeats the imagery of a chip rack in her work, she emancipates it from its utilitarian identity. The *Racks* serve as a signifier of place, feeling, and culture. The familiar images transport viewers to the local bodega—often a staple within Latinx communities not only for its offered services, but also for its social importance. It's common to bump into a neighbor there and trade stories about the weekend.



The *Rack* works seem to communicate a desire for the sort of critique attributed to Pop art and other works focused on consumerism, but with a difference. In bodega aesthetics, the emphasis is placed on the collective relationship and experience of the viewer to the object rather than on the object itself. “It’s about local economies,” Hierro says. “When you think about a system that is rigged to a certain group’s benefit—we learned to hack that system to survive.” She presents the local economy not just as a means of sustenance, but as an experience in itself, which, in its gestalt, carries aesthetic value and richness.