

**PRESSBOOK**

Gabriel DE LA MORA

*Whitewall Art*

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## How Gabriel de la Mora uses Hair, Eggshells, and Feathers



**Gabriel de la Mora's** "TNTR AA" opened over the weekend at **Perrotin** New York, and is on view through April 13. The artist lives and works in Mexico City, and this show marks his first with the gallery.

De la Mora take a unique approach to creating in terms of materials and methods. Back in 2004, he decided to "quit painting," swapping out brushes and paint for feathers, eggshells, human hair, and other materials. His geometric pieces are vibrant and mesmerizing.

*Whitewall* asked de la Mora about what will be on view.

**WHITEWALL: The work on view at Perrotin this spring stems for your decision in 2004 to "quit painting." What prompted that decision?**

**GABRIEL DE LA MORA:** In February 2004, 15 years ago, I decided to quit painting. I thought the best way to explore painting it was getting distance from it. This is how I went back to drawing and started writing many different definitions of what drawing is. I kept: "Drawing is a group of lines and dots that creates an image of an idea or concept on paper." This is how I got human hair as a material to use in this new way of drawing.

Human hair makes a line, and the definition of a line is a succession of dots. The hair is a dot and a line at the same time. With this, I started the series of drawings using human hair, drawing portraits where each line contains the DNA or genetic information of each portrayed person, the figuration by time turns into abstraction.

Something that started as a series, then became a new media through which to explore many things.

**WW: How did that choice lead to your current choices in material?**

**GDLM:** This first choice appeared just few months after I finished my MFA at Pratt Institute in New York (2001-2003). A few months later I moved back to Mexico City, and you are right, it was so important for the future of my career.

The human hair drawing series started an infinite selection of materials to explore in different directions, always trying to find and explore new possibilities of painting, drawing, and sculpture.

**WW: What do you enjoy about working with feathers, egg shells, and human hair? What are some of the challenges?**

**GDLM:** I really enjoy everything around these materials. I like the color, the texture, the elements that compose each of these structures...the chemical composition of the eggshells, the DNA or genetic information on the feathers, and the human hair, etc.

I write and take photos of the entire process for each piece. The challenges are the future projects, future exhibition, future ideas I am always writing on my sketch and notebooks.

I like how from one series always appear a new series. I like that the new series are stronger in many directions than the previous one. I like to feel that the best series I have is the one I am working now.

**WW: Are there other materials you're exploring using?**

**GDLM:** I am working at the same time in and around five different series, and there are many materials I have explored and I will explore, like discarded shoe soles, walls, ceilings, discarded rubber blankets, aluminum plaques, cover slips from microscope, styrofoam balls, vintage photographs, and documents, among many others. I am always looking for new materials.

**WW: What role does color play in your work?**

**GDLM:** Color is just one of many characteristics or elements on each piece. For many years I was attracted to the extremes: black and white and all the neutral colors in the middle.

In this show all the hair drawings and the eggshell pieces show their natural colors. In the case of the feathers, they are from chickens dyed artificially in 13 different colors. The combinations I used in some pieces are based in the combinations that nature apply on different birds.

Each color has a different meaning by culture. This is why I am very interested in color, the repetition and differences that exist, the combinations and all the ranges that each color could have.