



barrioPOP

The Last TACO, Now Open, 2020

Artist as *Bricoleur*

The term “bricolage” has had a lively life in academia, describing people’s make-do assemblages in different contexts, from architecture to education to information systems. It dates from the 1960’s, when anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss used the term to describe a sensibility where people re-use ideas and materials to problem-solve, even in conditions of constraint.*

The cultural strategy Levi-Strauss describes was not new, however, at least not for Pop artists in the 1950’s; artists like Robert Rauschenberg used assemblage and mixed media long before the practice of *bricolage* (as a sensibility as well as a product) entered mainstream discussions in universities.

We should better appreciate *bricoleurs*, today exemplified by CANDE AGUILAR. In his new barrioPOP show, *The Last TACO, NOW OPEN*, CANDE’S mixed-media works deeply situated in the US-Mexico Borderlands of his home near Brownsville, Texas in the Rio Grande Valley. Offering—insisting?—on contextualizing his art through his own geographic and cultural lens, CANDE asserts his vision in each work.

In his own words, CANDE combines his own images with those from pop culture (such as The Joker), as well as with local visual references (such as hand-painted business signs, which are part of the visual landscape of the Valley).** The resulting works show process. For example, found objects like signs in the mixed media might show age in the fading of the paint. In addition to showing us process, the works are, after all, products, too. These finished products reference, broadly, mainstream culture, Borderlands culture, and his own positionality in both of these cultures, as well as his positionality as a self-described outsider in the art world. Some might argue that CANDE is no longer an outsider, as he is a galleried artist with a September 2019 show in New York; yet this does not negate that CANDE is self-taught and that the mainstream art world has historically marginalized Chicano voices.

To assert his artistic voice, then, CANDE has problem-solved his way around gatekeeping, in the way of a true *bricoleur* finding a means to an end. His pop culture references evoke a sense of familiarity for the audience, and he is very generous with his wit. These elements ensure that other, more personal, themes—of home, of belonging, of memory—stay with us after the immediacy of seeing Jabba the Hutt flip us all off while wearing Mickey Mouse’s gloves.

* Claude Lévi-Strauss. 1962. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: Phoenix, 1962.

** CANDE AGUILAR. Interview. June 10, 2019.



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Museum Floors are Noisy, 2020, acrylic, oil and fabric paint on found panel, 12x20 in. cande aguilar



14 **Sunsets** 2020, acrylic, oil, spray, marker on found signage, 44x96 in. cande aguiar

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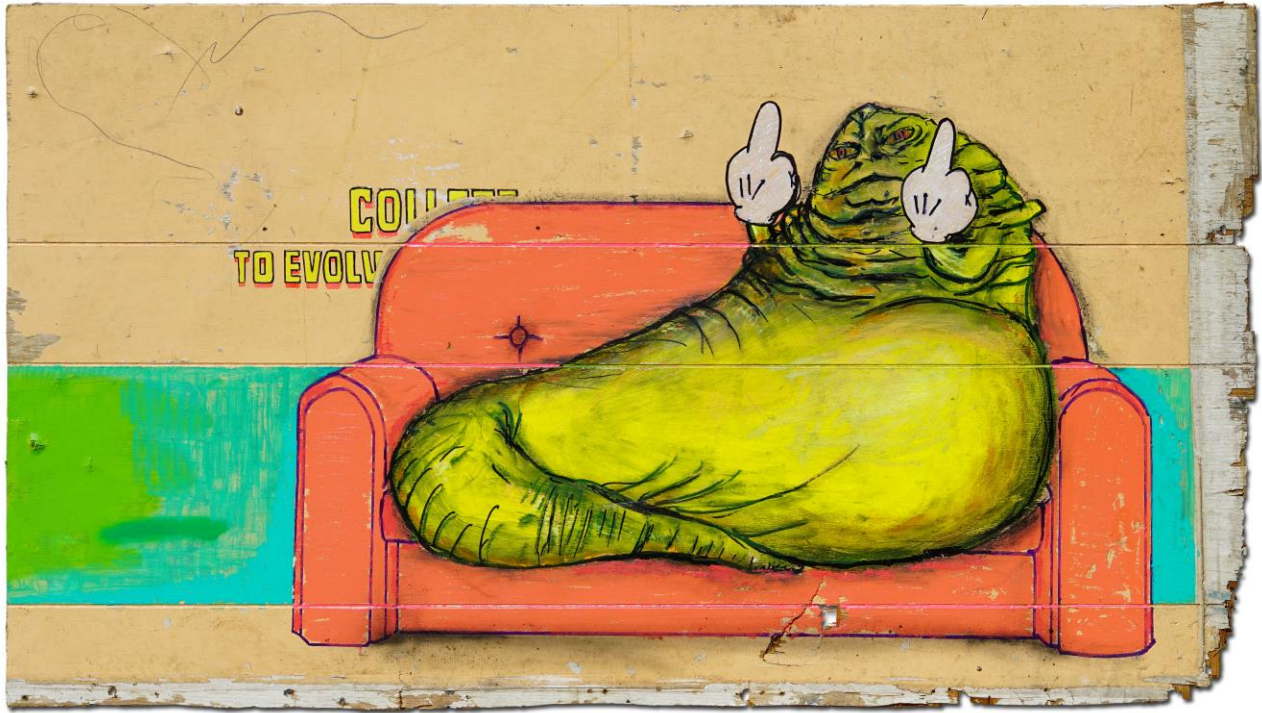
To dream of a **couch** represents total comfort with an issue or situation. You are comfortable, bored, or lazy about something. ... To dream of sitting on a couch with another person represents total comfort with some aspect of your personality based on whatever qualities stand out the most about that person.

A hue of **fluorescent orange** is yellow which is associated with making decisions. Bright orange can imply simulation and energy.

fading flowers are also considered attributes of a lonely person.

Various search sources





2 **Parties** 2020, acrylic, oil, glitter paint, solid marker, spray paint on found panel, 23.5x44in.
cande aguiar

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Even outside the Star Wars universe, **Jabba the Hutt** is famous for his bulbous body and slug-like features. In the decades since Jabba debuted in Return of the Jedi, he's gone on to become a symbol for gluttony, avarice, and corruption — and it's all thanks to his iconic and thoroughly disgusting bod.

In Western culture, "**the finger**" or the middle finger (as in giving someone the (middle) finger or the bird or flipping someone off) is an obscene hand gesture. ... Extending the finger is considered a symbol of contempt in several cultures, especially in the Western world.

The United States has only **two** major political **parties**: the Democrats and the Republicans. There are also smaller parties that aren't as well known. These parties have a duopoly, meaning that they share almost all the political power in the country. Most democratic countries have more than two parties.

Various search sources



Cosmic Couple, Corona Boom 2020, acrylic, oil, solid marker, permanent marker & spray paint on found wood panel, 23.5x46 in. cande aguilar

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There are also many poetic and literary quotes considered as tagging. ***Cosmic love*** Many of these are more of a self-respecting and spiritual nature than they are a romantic love between two separate people. Also, music can define cosmic love, more than just the feelings of one person for another.

Blue-green like the color cyan represents cool calmness and peace because it can be the color of water.

Couch sex can be a hot place to mix it up in a relationship; it can be the setting for impromptu sex during downtime; or, it can be a convenient place to get it on.

Various search sources



Crosswalk Dilemma 2020, acrylic, oil, solid marker, permanent marker, fabric paint, charcoal, spray paint on found panel, 23x33 in. cande aguilar

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Joker represents the storm within the calm. He is the nervousness you feel when you have to speak in front of a crowd. He is the anger that wells up in you when someone crosses in front of the queue. On a sunny day, he is the small speck of cloud on distant horizon indicating a bad evening.

To see an **alien** in your dream shows that you have actually experienced part of your own psyche which is unknown to you. You may feel that this 'unfamiliar' part of yourself is hostile or an opponent.

It is important to remember that every character featured in or dreams is just a representative of the different parts of ourselves. Ask yourself what part of you this alien could represent. Your primary step ought to be to get to know this overlooked facet of yourself on your own. As an example, you might be behaving in ways which are 'alien' to you or have sensations that are 'unlike you'. It is undesirable to repress or neglect these parts of your nature. Because of its unfamiliarity may in time become a mentor and also ally, what at very first appears as frightening. This alter-ego might have something good to supply you. Filed under, Dream Symbols

A **hole** in a wall suggests a breach of trust or privacy.

For some people, (**crosswalk**) pedestrian crossings represent order, civilization and safety. For others they represent repression and regimentation of people's behaviour.

The contrast of **white and black** light and darkness, day and night) has a long tradition of metaphorical usage, traceable to the Ancient Near East, and explicitly in the Pythagorean Table of Opposites. In Western culture as well as in Confucianism, the contrast symbolizes the moral dichotomy of good and evil.

Various search sources



Sun up Sun Down, 2020, acrylic, oil, ink marker, solid marker, crayon, and spray paint on found panels, 21x23 in cande aguilar

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Number Seven is one of those figures. It symbolizes every positive and valuable matter in existence like prosper life, happiness, renewal, and perfection. Some numerologist even believes that number seven is so perfect and powerful that it represents a connection to the universe.

The **paper boat** is the return of humans to nature. A Human naked from all the stuff which from hundreds and hundreds years he built himself around, above and inside him. This is his humble return to Nature, looking for harmony, mingling and rebirth.

The **sun** will represent life, influence, and strength. He will symbolize energy, will, being clear, and self.

Blue is the color of the sky and sea. It is often associated with depth and stability. It symbolizes trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence, intelligence, faith, truth, and heaven. ... Blue is strongly associated with tranquility and calmness.

In art, **cream color** is often used as a base for skin tones. A quiet and pleasant hue, cream is neutral, calm and relaxing. A quiet and pleasant hue, cream is neutral, calm and relaxing.

The **rainbow** symbolism also serves as an obvious symbol of peace and serenity. These feelings are often evoked when looking at a rainbow. .

Various search sources



Black Lightning 2020, acrylic, oil, solid marker, fabric paint, soft pastels, & spray paint on found panels, 34x39 in. cande aguilar

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A **single rose** represents love at first sight, or if it's coming from a long-term partner, they are saying, "you are still the one". **cactus** has come to represent endurance, tenacity and strength in the face of adversity—they survive even when it seems impossible.

plinth pedestal (noun) an architectural support or base
the color **black** represents strength, seriousness

Sailboats symbolize journey and adventure. They also are associated with being carried along by the "breath of life," as its primary form of momentum is gained through the wind in its sails.
the **rectangle** is a trusted familiar shape that represents honesty, solidity and stability.

A hue of **fluorescent orange** is yellow, which is associated with, making decisions also implies the following emotions: warm, happiness, domination and also logic.

Various search sources





The Last Taco 2020, acrylic, oil, solid marker, ink marker, melted crayon, spray paint, & fabric paint on found wood sign panel, 95.5x48 in. cande aguilar

Black and white cat with a clown wig and shoes, representing absurdity, rebellion, and chaos, presiding over an object that represents nourishment and where new understandings begin. A black bird, dinosaur, artificial flowers and a snake, symbols of intuition, nobility, sloughing, false ideas, with a fragmented Rainbow, symbol of conflict with others. .

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The **dining table** has always been a symbol of many things: the place where we nourish ourselves, where we come together, celebrate important milestones, share experiences, and create new understandings. .

Some associate cats colored black as evil, but black can also mean protection from bad things, while white represents good things in the future and purity of spirit. A combination (**black & white cat**) is both those things, and is sometimes viewed as a blessing of balance and prosperity. .

The **clown** is a symbol of the mind. The clown scoffs at everything serious in the world, he is cynical and uses humor to show people that they are too serious. He reminds us that to be a man is to make mistakes, to laugh and fool around. .

The **shoes** —bright and ubiquitous—visibly represent Güllen's decline into frantic, amoral consumerism at the expense of Ill's life and human dignity. .

Blackbirds represent knowledge. They are carriers of intelligence and quick wit, Blackbirds also represent intuition. .

A **dinosaur** represents dragon, protection, fear, past, Karmas, strength, courage, nobility and bravery. Stop fearing your past at once if you dream of a beautiful and happy dinosaur. You have not done anything wrong in your life! .

Artificial flowers symbolize false ideas and deceived expectations. .

snakes represent fertility or a creative life force. As snakes shed their skin through sloughing, they are symbols of rebirth, transformation, immortality, and healing. .

a **fragmented rainbow** indicates something bad, especially in interpersonal relationship, and you may conflict with others.

Various search sources





Now Open, 2020, spray paint, fabric paint, ink marker, & solid marker on found coroplast sign, 48x48 in. cande aguiar

