

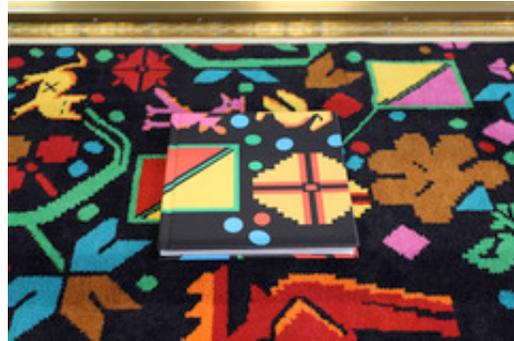
ARTFORUM

Cayetano Ferrer

WORKS SITED

**Los Angeles Central Library, 630 West Fifth Street
April 1–May 31**

As part of “Works Sited,” a series of intriguing exhibitions mounted in display cases at Los Angeles’s Central Library, Cayetano Ferrer plays the role of postmodern design savant, linking the building’s interior architecture with that of casinos. A takeaway brochure details how motifs from the library’s 1926 rotunda ceiling were incorporated into a 1980s carpet renovation; conversely, by placing found casino carpet in the case, Ferrer elevates floor covering to a readerly field of contemplation. Fragments of Fiesta Casino’s flooring, salvaged from a Dumpster in Las Vegas, have been pieced together to the vitrine’s dimensions, with black wood shapes filling irresolvable gaps. *Fiesta Carpet Study*, 2010, a book documenting Ferrer’s reconstructive process, lies camouflaged among the allover pattern of jewel-toned, geometric flora and fauna.



Cayetano Ferrer, *FIESTA / LA ANONIMA (PARTY / THE ANONYMOUS)*, 2010, carpet fragments, wood blocks, book, 72 x 29”.

Pairing library and casino suggests some obvious contrasts: order versus chance, intellection versus hedonism, and public good versus private gain. In light of recent cuts to library hours, the gesture also links the downfall of an overly speculative economy with wrecked city finances and, ultimately, a disinvestment in deep thought. While Ferrer associates the recombinant, almost randomized approach of postmodern design with the chance processes of gambling, he also takes the casino textile seriously as an object of design. This is most apparent in *Fiesta Carpet Study*, in which figures from the carpet pattern are analyzed as if pictograms in a meaningful sign system. Given that casino floor patterns are designed to keep gamblers energized—an instance of abstraction’s capitalization and instrumentalization—Ferrer provocatively reads an aesthetic system into a form of abstraction which has no logic—only an instrumentalized betting logic, which is no logic at all.

— Natilee Harren

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