

Isabel Vazquez at Galeria Coabey

By FELIX BONILLA NORAT
Special to The STAR

Sandpaper your fingertips the way safe crackers do before a job in order to best enjoy Isabel Vazquez's textural works now being shown at Coabey Gallery in Old San Juan.

She has done better textural work before with real paint, not the mixed media or graphics now on display. But her present batch of works has another touch: eroticism to get your libido back in shape.

Before you see these "Erotic Apples" touch earth or knock on wood to feel earthy or wooden texture then go forth and enjoy Isabel's world. Let your contained spirits be free, that's important for the feel of it.

Actually her erotic images are quite innocent. What did you expect from a young lady in our old society? All you can really see here are straightforward mixed media drawings, collographs and ceramics with here and there a part asleep inside an

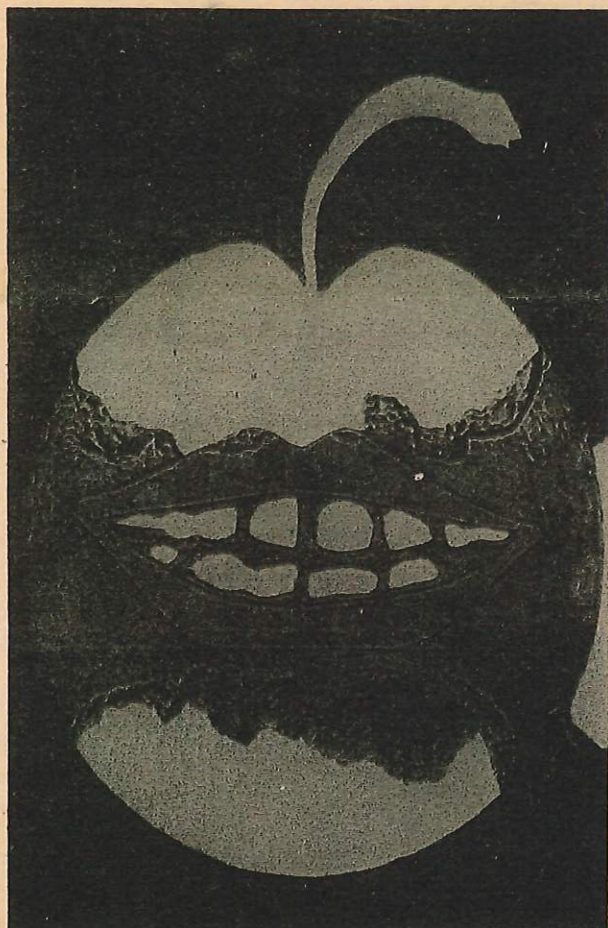
apple. A chaste world indeed. But there's a shocking collagraph in which the sleepy penis drips black ink as if to shame Venus with ungentlemanly accusations. Lies can kill reputations, Isabel says here.

All of the torsos, male or female, in the drawings or in clay are armless and headless, most significantly. But the silhouettes of somebody else's forearms and hands play chastely in about five of the drawings, as if the figures were not very autonomous

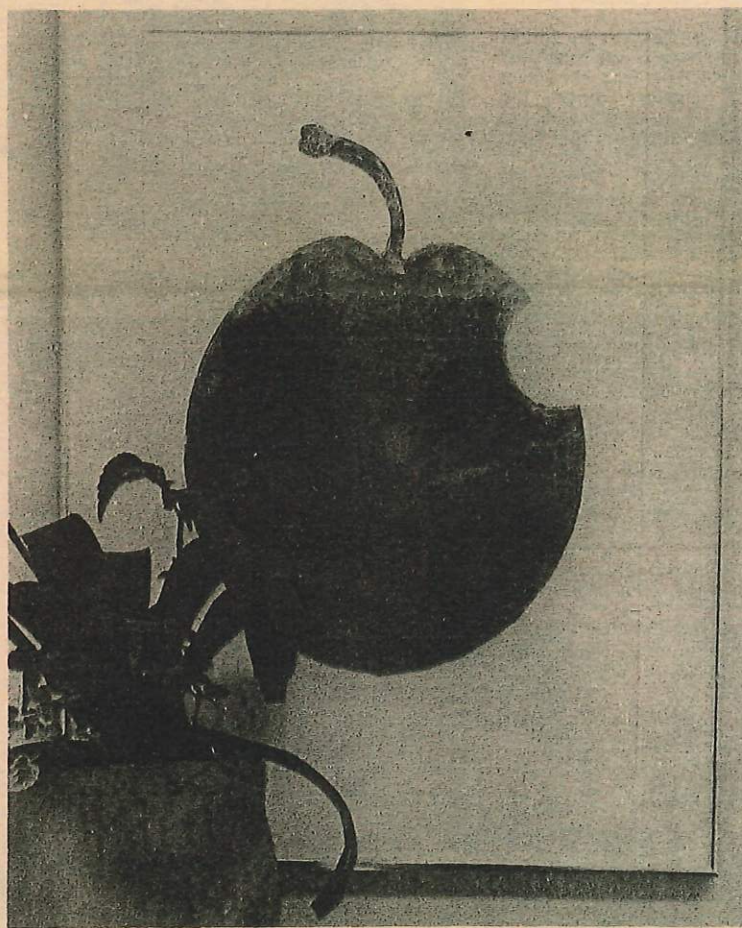
erotically. I can hear Isabel say "We cannot call ourselves an autonomous people if we lie still and depend on imported handouts and handwork." Art and Eros really can be metaphorically political too.

The plain terracotta torsos in the show are flower pots or vessels. Imagine: macho vessels. And there are four surprise ceramic boxes with lids and fine finishes with allusive painted details outside and movable parts inside to tickle some eroded Eros.

I believe Isabel Vazquez made a



from the "Manzanas eroticas" series



part of "Torso," and one of the "Manzanas eroticas" series

GALLERIES

CARNEGIE EXHIBITION HALL
Carnegie Library Ponce de Leon Ave. Stop 1.
Puerta de Tierra. 724-1046. Open Mon. to Fr. 9
a.m. to 9 p.m. Sat. 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

CASA BLANCA MUSEO Casa Blanca. Entrance
at end of Calle San Sebastian. Exhibition of
works by Felix Rodriguez Baez, "Mariposas
suenos y otras Cosas."

CASA DEL LIBRO
255 Calle del Cristo 723-0354. Open Mon. to
Fri. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sat. 2 to 5 p.m. The Art
of the Calendar."

GALERIA BOTELLO
208 Cristo St. 723-9987 Prints, painting and
sculpture, mostly by Puerto Rican Artists.

EL TRAPICHE GALLERY
200 Cristo St. San Juan. Open Mon. to Sat. 10
to 12 and 1 to 4 Sunday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Current Show: Polygraphy by Joaquin Reyes.

EDUCATION DEPT. GALLERY
Central offices corner Cesar Gonzalez and
Kalaff Sts. Urb. Las Monjitas. Mon to Fri. 8 to
1:24. Current show works by students of all
public schools.

GALERIA COABEY
101 San Sebastian St., Old San Juan
723-1018. Current show, work by Isabel Vaz-
quez.

GALERIA CONDADO
Convention Center. Open 11-7 every day.
723-6090. Ext 1632 Exhibition of work by local
artists. Current show: "La hora de diseno,"
works with watch parts by Jaime Perez.

GALERIA FOTOGRAFIA PL 900
Ponce de Leon 900, Santurce 725-2617 open
9-5 daily except Tuesday and Wednesday.
GALERIA W. LABIOSA
415 Sol St. San Juan. 724-6393 Open Mon to

Fri. 1:30-5:30 p.m. Sat 9-5:30 p.m. Watercolors
and other works by Labiosa.

GALERIA LA CALETA
70 Caleta de San Juan. Old San Juan.
723-8627. Paintings and prints by proprietor
Luis Cajigas, ceramica, graphics and sculpture.

GALERIA MARIA RECHANY
Magdalena 1363. Open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon.
to Sat. 725-4828. Paintings, and prints by
Puerto Rican artists.
GALERIA MUNICIPIO
City Hall, Old San Juan. Old photos from col-
lections of Antonio Molinas and others.

mistake in showing all her "Erotic Apples" at the same time. Picasso was quite repetitious with his works but he never showed all of them at once; he waited. That's why he filled five castles in succession. Miss Vazquez needs a castle in more ways than one.

In the collographs the red ink and round dominant shape, even in its playful variations, goes from one work to another. The variations include bites of the round apple and touches inside it such as the black

ink-dripping penis. In another, inside a small apple inside a larger one there is a green landscape, as if illustrating a Sapphic poem or experience. Various landscapes in the show seem to be unstable fincas or pieces of the earth to hang onto or to have a castle on. The daubs of color do not have the freedom that a real game with painting materials could produce as in some of Paul Jenkin's works. One landscape with collaged screens or pieces of paper placed to suggest depth planes is more believable but it

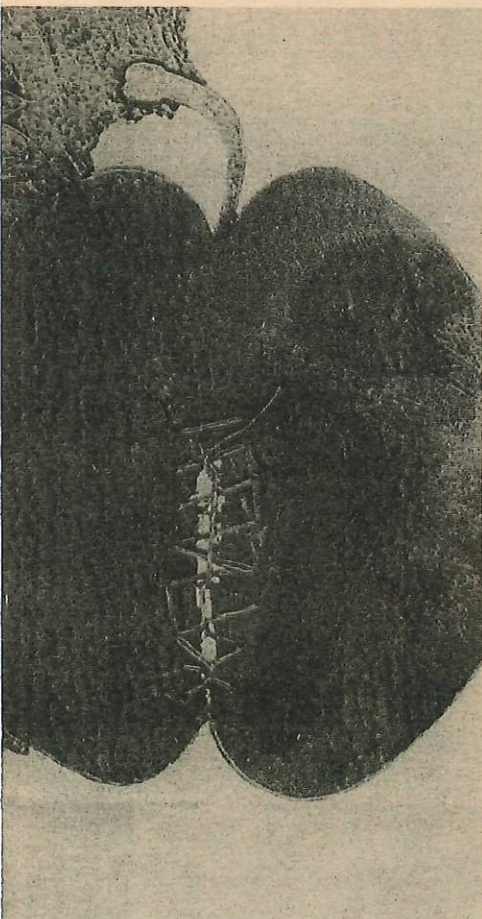
has very strange saturated color relationships. Normally, Miss Vazquez' color is subdued. Her art so far has depended more on tonal and textural relationship than on color. Maybe these strange landscape color saturations are a new art highway for her, or better yet, a "finca" for her castle.

Maybe the strange nicely textured dark tonal relationships of the dark female torso seen here against darkness, with the pubic region showing up only because of its textural stitches is a swan song for the feudal chastity

belts which have castigated women one way or another even up to today.

"Texture" actually is a weaving term, and weaving is a feudal job for women. Myrna Baez, Isabel Vazquez and others have been producing textures by printing or spraying woven materials as an aberrant behavior. It is time to cut feudal cords.

Let color, the real painter's tool, come to their aid, and to the aid of Puerto Rican painting which depends too much on tonal value and on color as light, not color as color.



from the "Manzanas eroticas" series



Isabel Vazquez

GALERIA OLLER
Calle Escorial 366 Caparra Hts. 782-3171. Open Tues to Thurs. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Fri. 2-9 Sat. 9-2. Paintings and Graphics by Puerto Rican artists.
Current show: Paintings by Isaura Mergal

GALERIA RAQUEL
San Jose 257, Old San Juan. Mon. to Sat. 10-6; Sundays 1-6. Mostly oils by European artists.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF PUERTO RICO
1396 Georgetti, Santurce. Mon. to Fri. 9 to 4. A summary of history of P.R. in antique objects.

LA FORTALEZA
End of Fortaleza St., Old San Juan. Open only during business hours. Show: Collective exhibit in tribute to Dr. Jose R. Oliver.

MANOS
Convention Center, Condado. Contemporary ceramics by the Caparra Studio.
Current show: Ceramics by Breeze Griswold Sobek and a collective exhibition by member-artists.

MUSEO DE LA ESCUELA DE ARTES PLASTICAS
El Morro Grounds Mon. to Fri. 8 to 5. Sat. 2 to

5. Current show Works by Graphic arts students of Profs. Jose Alicea and Susana Herrero.

MUSEO DE LA FUNDACION
Behind Tapia Theater, Plaza Colon 725-5962. Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mon Indian Artifacts and sculpture.

MUSEO DEL GRABADO LATINOAMERICANO
Casa de los Contralueres. 101 San Sebastian St., Plaza San Jose second floor. Open every day from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

MUSEO DEL CONVENTO DE SANTO DOMINGO
Instituto de Cultura. Open every day 8:30 a.m.

to 5 p.m. Corner Cristo and Norzagaray, Plaza San Jose. 724-0700.
Current show: Paintings and watercolor by Epifanio Irizarry

PONCE MUSEUM OF ART
Las Americas Ave. 842-6215 Open Wed to Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sun 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Current Show: Retrospective exhibition by Lorenzo Homar.

UPR MUSEUM
764-0000. Ext. 2452 or 2456. Open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sundays, 10 to 5.