

Rediscovering the fridge. Journey through artworks and spatial proposals featuring the refrigerator // Redescubriendo el frigorífico. Recorrido por obras de arte y propuestas espaciales protagonizadas por el refrigerador



This investigation recognises the identity of the fridge as a symbolic object in the contemporary life through the work of artists and architects from different means and moments of the 20th and 21th century. The discussed works move from food voyeurism to the mutability of this appliance into a construction element, demonstrating its enigmatic nature. Considering an esthetic value in this device, which was originated as functional, the quantity of works of art featured by it manifests an intimate connection between our digestive tract and the machine.



Esta indagación reconoce la identidad del frigorífico como objeto simbólico en la vida contemporánea a través del trabajo de artistas y arquitectos de distintos medios y momentos de los siglos XX y XXI. Las obras comentadas viajan del voyerismo alimentario a la mutabilidad del electrodoméstico en elemento constructivo, poniendo en evidencia la naturaleza enigmática del mismo. Contemplando un valor estético en el aparato originado como utilitario, la cantidad de obras protagonizadas por él manifiestan una relación íntima entre nuestro aparato digestivo y la máquina.

fridge, postmodern art, contemporary art, architecture, food

frigorífico, arte posmoderno, arte contemporáneo, arquitectura, comida



Notwithstanding that the fridge hasn't awakened an aesthetic interest in the artistic production as vibrant as other domestic inert items like the window, the chair, the bed or the bath, it seems to be the most frequent appliance in visual arts.

Before being refilled, the refrigerator is a vacant residence. A series of rooms sized according to the food pyramid categories and positioned depending on the thermal demand of each group. It was designed to fit among the rest of the kitchen furniture, and its height cannot surpass the range radio of an adult's arm. Made to be suitable for the domestic culinary size and for the capacity of our stomach, it is flexible with our purchasing power, as it's able to chill a scarce and an extensive amount of products. Its dimension adapts to that of an human adult's body just as the bed in which we lay does, and the orifice in the wall that we cross from one room to another, or the same way a coffin takes us in precisely.

Something in the way it looks, the content or the meaning of the domestic refrigerator has drawn the attention of photographers, sculptors, painters and conceptual artists of the 20th and 21st century around the world. Hereunder, some of their work will be commented. For that matter, they selected works will be grouped in three typologies differentiated among them based on the contextualisation of the appliance at issue. In the first section, works that portray domestic fridges in its most habitual location, the private residence, will be remarked. Next, the perspective will be shifted to the interior of the refrigerator with a couple of works that suggest the incarnation of the human body into the machine. Lastly, other two initiatives will be presented that pay tribute to the fridge once it's constituent purpose has ceased. This journey aims to confirm an aesthetic collective interest in the domestic refrigerator, as well as to discover the possible motivations underneath this tendency.

1★

At home

Kitchen innards, the physical place where food is conserved at home, prolongate the life of our sustenance. Introducing this device, apparently a petty one, the discussed works in this section lead to both individual and communal reflections. The work of the three authors are carried out at home, uncovering an aesthetic value in the everyday life. From pictorial portrait to documentary photography, they evince the emotional bond that can be originated between an object and a subject when what they share is the nourishment.

Being the sixties the moment when fridges began to be manufactured more often and to become popular in Spain¹, it's possible that *Nevera de hielo* (1966) by Antonio López García is the first spanish pictorial portray of one (fig. 1). This master has celebrated more than one refrigerator and it's contents by painting it.

¹ The first electric cool-boxes where imported from other countries, and so they were accessible just for a few homes. It wasn't until the 1960 decade that they started to be manufactured at a bigger scale and, therefore, to be popular in Spain (MONTESINOS, 2013, 164).



FIGURE 01 » Diptych: [left] Antonio López, *Nevera de hielo*, 1966, [right] Antonio López, *Nevera nueva*, 1991-94, oil on canvas, 240 x 190 cm.

Previously, in 1963, he had painted and engraved a fragment of a cool box and its surroundings. That ice cupboard was often located in the coolest place of the house, just as a cellar. It was once of the predecessor of the electric refrigerator we know today. Both images, *La fresquera* with the nuts, the soup dish and an oil tin above it and *Nevera de hielo* with one of its doors open and traces of an ingestion over it, show modest daily rations that are also deserving of the iconographic reverence. It was in the ultimate decade of the last century, when we've gotten accustomed to its presence in our homes, when he painted another one, this time wide opened. López look at this wrapper generating a suggestive image of it. Allied to the style of other of its personal paintings, he framed this place exalting its relevance: the fridge is something more than an inert item. In *Nevera nueva* (fig.1), this kitchen skyscraper erects itself lonely in an empty room, with only the fresh products preserved in it.

The empty rooms of López's refrigerators are inhabited. The warmth that *Nevera nueva* instills is partly caused by the relief of discovering that the painter and its family, not only could afford a new refrigerator with freezer, but could also fill it up. In the same way, the warm light that lights up from the right top corner in its interior, oxygenates the room like a heart pumping blood to a whole organism. The chromatic coldness that dominates the surface of the canvas it's compensated with the filled up shelves.

Getting closer to the gastronomical portraiture of still lifes, López open refrigerators show one's own diet. The unease that often arises when checking other people's food, also appears in these scenes causing the same wonder as the classic still life painting, but in an icy and lethargic version. If Clara Peeters would have known the 20th century appliances, perhaps she would have portraided the lunch boxes and would have placed the vegetables in polystyrene drawers. In a casual encounter between a fridge and the Belgian artist's still lifes, the following collage gather an intimist contemporary self-portrait with her plentiful compositions of the 17th century (fig. 2).



FIGURE 02 » *Leaning out a fridge containing Clara Peeters still lifes*, 2024, collage, author's photography.

Moving about towards photography, seems pertinent to give a space to the distinguished North American photographer William Eggleston, pioneer in the use of colour photography in visual arts, and specially interested in mundane actions and objects. He was one of the first artists who collect the inside look of a refrigerator. Specifically, a 1970's Memphian freezer (fig. 3). It seems that Eggleston, just as López did in painting, crystallised the refrigerator as a place for introspection.

² (WATKINS, 2008, 204)

«Brought into the home, incorporated into daily life and socialised to perform a particular role, refrigeration shifted category from 'novel' to 'normal' and from 'luxury' to 'necessity'»². Once established as ordinary appliance in the North American house, when pre-cooked frozen edibles were on sale, it prepared itself to abandon the fashionable status to be neglected for the rest of the century and beyond. It was then when Eggleston beaten triviality by seeing in it a gastronomic cave.

FIGURE 03 » William Eggleston, *Untitled (Freezer)*, 1971-73, dye transfer print, 11 x 17 in.



By way of a biographical portrait, he left proof of the foresight ability of its owner, or his interest in cooked products, characterising the inhabitant in a deeper way than freezing its countenance. In this case, the artist found a bigger interest in the frozen compartment, perhaps for being a miraculous novelty tat of storing food for months. To paralyse rottenness, the same way that it can be done with a photographic camera, is a quarrel against the fleeting nature of our matter. The fascination of this image goes beyond its peculiar secrecy and its pale colour palette. It lies in the powerful ability to battle with the deterioration, within the fridge and on the photo paper.

A decade later and in Japan, Tokuko Ushioda also showed interest for open refrigerators. Her project *Reizōko* in Japanese and *Ice Box* in English collects fifty seven kitchens in about thirteen years, from 1981 up until 1994 (fig. 4). Its single edition from 1996 includes black and white photographs arranged in pairs in a one hundred and twenty eight pages book, in a way that each pair of images show the same refrigerator with its door closed and open.

FIGURE 04 » Image composition with two gelatin silver print dyptych by Tokuko Ushioda: [up] 46A/46B Hayama Kanagawa, *Ice Box* project, 1994, [down] 11A/11B Shibuya Tokyo, *Ice Box* project, 1994.



The idea of the project emerged when Ushioda shared room with a fridge in the apartment she inhabited with its child and the also photographer and the author's husband, Shinzō Shimao. In about twenty three square meters, the new machine stood out for its size and resonance. In conversation with the Canadian Center for Architecture, the artist reveals the impressions that lead her to start this project,

I wondered why three people needed such a big thing. But I thought okay, even if it was half-broken, it's usable. For two or three years we used it and it was so strong that our vegetables froze immediately. The motor made a lot of noise, especially when I was sleeping. When I looked at the refrigerator, it made me wonder what kind of life I was leading. We slept right beside it and the loud sound it made above my head at night made me sit awake wondering what would happen to me in the future.³

³ CCA, Canadian Center for Architecture. "Familiar Observations. Tokuko Ushioda in conversation with Stefano Graziani and Bas Princen". 2022.

Other noteworthy documentary works that have looked over foreign kitchens exposing the its owners lifestyles are *Fridge Food Soul* by Oliver Degorce, *Refrigerators* by Mark Menjivar or *Show me your fridge* by Sandra Junker (fig. 5), this last one including portrait of the owners in their home environment. Those projects take on the portrayal of people through the food they choose to consume, their quantity, how they organise it in the different partitions or the state of their conservation. As the close-up of a digestive system, the refrigerator is the stand, the siege that delimits and that goes unnoticed and the food it accommodates narrate the story that the observer reads. One thing that is essential and that make a distinction between Ushioda's process and those other approaches, is that Tokuko includes the exterior appearance of the machine and its surroundings. The framing of her images covers more than just the appliance's door. This is facilitated by the use of a 6x6 inch camera, Zenza Bronica S2 model, with square aspect ratio. Within the fifty six homes, not all the fridges are situated in a kitchen and not with the same arrangement. The refrigerator can be found in a transit place, in the threshold that differentiates one room from another, between an atrium and a living room, indiscretely in a dining room or closer to the laundry room than to the oven. Often it rests on wood floors, inappropriate for a wet room like the kitchen. It was also seen with its back turned to a glass door and with an unusual orientation in relation to the adjoining furniture.

FIGURE 05 » Triptych composed of:
[left] Oliver Degorce, *Fridge Food Soul*, 1993-2017, [centre] Mark Menjivar, *Owner of Defunct Amusement Park. Alpine TX, Refrigerators series*, 2007-2012, [right] Sandra Junker, *London, Show me your Fridge series*.



It was also established in an office, or next to a clothes line, transferring the warmth that it emits to the damp fabrics. In many cases, the cold cupboard is hugged by bottles and jars that await outside for space to be liberated in its interior. If its roof has free height, it is oftentimes occupied by food bags, magazines or vases. Some family uses two nearly identical fridges, one next to the other, both brimming with products. Other machines that are out of the norm, have a unusually extended width. Thus, as a typological catalogue, the work gathers up a variety of refrigerator designs.

Generating that twofold sequence, a veil is lifted in a way that accentuates the nudity sensation. Initially, with the refrigerator door closed, it draws the attention to the context, when it's only one more facade in the kitchen scenery. In that moment, the glance searches for information in the furniture and products around them, paying attention to the objects and graphics that hung and lay in the surfaces. When the door opens, as entering in an unfamiliar bedroom, all the attention goes to its contents. This *Goyarian* effect of *The Clothed Maja*, *The Naked Maja*, emphasise the impression of accessing a confidential space. Uncovering culinary private universes, each image that those artists produced including the freezing closet, ensue as a biographical report when they are isolated, and as an anthropological research as a whole.

2*

In the body

The refrigerator has also participated as a habitable facility in the arts. As coffin where to introduce the body, or as machine with which to connect some human organs. In relation to the interactions between the architectural object and the human body, is worth mentioning the research carried out by the architects couple Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio, expressed in the text titled *Flesh. Architectural probes* (1994). Among other issues, in it they reflect and invent on the encounters between the organic and the artificial, enriching the synergies that can be produced with the human postures and actions and the forms and uses of architecture and its quotidian objects. In *The Mutant Body of Architecture*, the analysis by Georges Teyssot which introduces *Flesh*, he encourages to the redefining of the relationships between human and artificial bodies: The first task architecture ought to assume, therefore, is that of defining and imagining an environment not just for "natural" bodies but for bodies projected outside themselves, absent and ecstatic, by means of their technologically extended senses. Far from assimilating the tool with the body according to the mechanistic tradition of Cartesian dualism, we must conceive tool and instrument "like a second sort of a body, incorporated into and extending our corporal powers" (Leder, *The Absent Body*, p. 179). It then becomes possible and even necessary to logically invert the terms of our proposition on the role of architecture. The incorporation of technology is not effected by "imagining" a new environment, but by reconfiguring the body itself, pushing outward to where its artificial extremities encounter "the world".⁴

⁴ TEYSSOT, Georges. "The Mutant Body of Architecture". In: DILLER, E. and SCOFIDIO, R. *Flesh, Architectural probes*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, Inc, 1994, p. 16.

In accordance with Teyssot's posture, which he interprets that Diller and Scofidio have, architecture must fix the attention towards the evolution of the human body to adapt to it. To work on discovering how to equip it to «inhabit the world», as he declares in the following paragraph.

In this context, the «natural body» can be interpreted with the concept of the ciborg, that is a living being that interacts uninterruptedly with artificial tools, or that incorporate prothesis, merging together with the machinery. This way, the machine and the human entities share functions inside or outside of themselves.

The work that more accurately exemplifies an earthly bond, nearly prosthetic, between the human body and a refrigerator, appears in *In the Kitchen* performance by Helen Chadwick, presented in 1977 at the Chelsea College of Art & Design of London (fig. 6). It's a series of interactions in which the artist fuse together with different devices, putting together a kitchen formed by an oven, a washing machine, a fridge and a sink. These four furnitures are meticulously built with PVC fabric and metal structures that give it shape. The result is a set of pieces of volatile appearance although realistic which can be worn. In a carnal act, the human figure of the artist incarnates with the refrigerator.

A female body is contained in the rectangular prism, which pretends to be into operation through a lighted bulb in its interior and a suspended wire that comes out from it. The artist bring to light that which remains hidden in the daily movements of routine. That which is perceptible, although not visible, the hetero-patriarchal roles that sustain, in certain moments and places, familiar unities. To this effect, Chadwick combines the body and the machine to reveal, in an illustrative and direct way, how the living organism of women and their functions merge with those of the kitchen. How the identity of the housekeeper is blended with the kitchen tools. The appliances, specially commercialised in their origins by means of sexist gender discourses that baptised them as the work machinery for her.

This way, just as the human rush around operating synchronically with the electrical devices, the proximity between the biological body and the technological one narrows. The products purchasing, their conservation, storage and their preparation got optimised thanks to the studies around ergonomics that started to be applied to product and architecture design in the beginning of the 20th century in the domestic space with the purpose of mediating between the space for the human body and the new space for the machines⁵. Consequently, a correspondence among subjects and objects of different nature occurs and one cannot complete a task without the other, getting trapped in a common functioning to serve their purpose.

Case of our body, what the fridge harbours ends up being a part of the matter we are made of, and the artist makes it evident bringing our palate closer to the human flesh. She suggests that her own being is available as manageable stock for the consumption. The colours of her figure stand out on the white box. Her skin tone recalling a cooked chicken thigh, her eyes some eggs, her lips a chili pepper and her pubic area a chocolate sponge cake.



FIGURE 06 » Helen Chadwick, *In the Kitchen (Fridge)*, 1977, colour archival pigment print, 29.9 x 20 cm.

⁵ Eduardo Prieto talks about the mecanisation and, specifically, of the ergonomics of movements and equipment of the domestic kitchen, in the North American context of the beginning of the 20th century (PRIETO, 2019, 95).

Suggesting an act of cannibalism or a severe feminist denunciation, Chadwick sacrifices herself to satiate our intellectual appetite. Another way of making the soma uncomfortable with coldness is generated with the project *Fresko* by the Berlin studio lead by Sam Chermayeff with the collaboration of Arno Brandhuber (fig. 7). By a need of incorporating fresh food for its direct sell, the design office decided to convert the establishment in a fridge.

They materialised this concept with various resources. In the first place, including a refrigerating room inside of the store, occupying about a ninth part of its surface. This way, the cold enclosure stayed in the centre of the room to be visited by the clients through a glass door. In the second place, a metallic and grey appearance was applied to all of the interior surfaces, covering the whole establishment up with the usual look appliances have. This is achieved by using grey tonalities, similar to that of the refrigerator façade, in the carpentry, shelves and other surfaces, as well as with an ashen floor. In the third place, an interior vertical finishing of projected grey insulation evokes the frost that gets accumulated in the bottom of fridges and freezers at times. This brings the sensation that there is a thermal layer that protects its interior from the external conditions. In addition, the glazed façade allows it to be perceived from the street as an industrial refrigerator.

In this Italian shop with fresh and ready-to-eat products, the clients get to experiment the environmental conditions where the product they are interested in, need to be kept. For a moment, they share that space. They need to cross a first threshold towards a space with hermetic look with respect to the urban space. After that, a second verge needs to be traversed to get to the fresher products. This way, the visitor is pushed to circulate inside of an electric device. The body needs to endure the new conditions, abandoning its comfort temperature to access the ambrosia. This way, the project alters the definitions of habitable space and temporary room. It shakes up the segregation between the back room and the window display, as well as amid the management and the purchase of the product. Therefore, the notions of intimacy and publicness dance, disrupting the traditional shopping ritual.

FIGURE 07 » Diptych: [left] Sam Chermayeff Office and Arno Brandhuber, axonometry of the *Fresko* establishment, 2021, [right] Sam Chermayeff Office and Arno Brandhuber, *Fresko* interior establishment, 2021. Oliver Helbig photography.



To reach the bottle of a sparkling wine, a creamy Robiola or a gianduja chocolate and nuts bar, requires of that type of meddling to finally celebrate, with greater satisfaction, the reward of its enjoyment. Paradoxically, the act of buying becomes more intimate. The consumer enters an otherwise inaccessible place to fulfill its needs.

Coming closer to Teyssot standpoint, we can look at the practices brought here as dispositions where the human body adapts its system to the electrical cooler and its processes, and vice versa. The following works also scour, deliberately or not, the cyborg notion. Of different means, aesthetic and purposes, both examples demonstrate and cause an intimate relationship with the refrigerator, in a way that the object inserts itself in our daily routine and, more discreetly, can also penetrate our collective identity.

3*

Out of kilter

When the refrigerator is dedicated to its function in an effective way, it goes unnoticed, so we don't normally spare an expense on the matter that it constitutes it. Yet, that reinforced shelving occupies a volume that becomes excessive once it stops cooling down our food. When it leaves our feast neglected, the presence of an object that was completely acceptable, turns into a dead weight that we need to get rid of. The works presented in this section show fridges out of kilter, meaning, liberated from its original mission, agitated and disrupted.

One of the posothumous identities that the refrigerator has acquired is that of the menhir, in the art work *Stonefridge: A Fridgehenge* by Adam Jonas Horowitz (fig. 8). With the aspiration of carrying out an architectural satire of the Stonehenge, in 1997 the artist started a bureaucratic fight to be allowed to build a cromlech in the technological waste era. Located in a landfill at the northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico, from 1998 until 2007, the even arrangement was about five meters high and had around thirty meters of diameter. Not being all the appliances exactly the same design, colour and height, they were very similar to each other. As sculpted stones, they were erected like columns linked by lintels. Mass production and planned obsolescence could favour the access to the required quantity of similar refrigerators that ended up shaping a new portrait of the end of the 20th century society.

⁶ (FARB HERNÁNDEZ, 2014)

The artist had to start all over again after seeing her first composition of used appliances shattered by the public services. Then, he saw himself as a Sisyphus with a fridge on his back, trying to raise a futuristic structure, at the same time primitive, that symbolised the wastefulness of machines, of the food they shelter as well as of the Freon they function with and that itself consumes the atmosphere.⁶

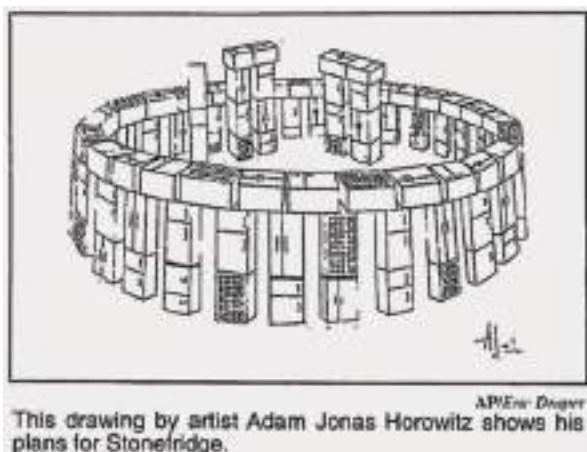


FIGURE 08 » Diptych: [left] Adam Jonas Horowitz, *Stonefridge*, design sketch, 1997, [right] Adam Jonas Horowitz, installation photography, 1997.

⁷ Capitalocene term is used here according to the definition that scientific like Jason Moore or Donna Haraway have given. Moore describes in a few words as «the “Age of Capital” in-nature» confronting it with the Antropocene notion as «the “Age of Man” and nature» (W. MOORE, 2014, 39), which is less suitable for what we are trying to refer to here, as the era in which the humanity has established complex relations with the Earth's resources and ecosystems. When asked about the Antropocene, Donna Haraway manifests her preference for this other term to define the last centuries, «Very much a part of that [the industrial humanity] are the exchange networks, the financial networks, extraction practices, wealth creations, and (mal)distributions in relation to both people and other critters.(...) The mass extinction events are related to the resourcing of the earth for commodity production, the resourcing of everything on the earth, most certainly including people, and everything that lives and crawls and dies and everything that is in the rocks and under the rocks» (HARAWAY, 2015, 233).

Disturbing a natural piece of land with about one hundred and thirty artificial cavities perceived as trash, Horowitz brought to the forefront the consequences of our supposed-to-be technological prosperity. A harmonious display of one of the attributes of the idiosyncrasy of the Capitalocene.⁷

In the New Mexican landfill where it was erected, guided towards the dawn in the summer solstice, the organic waste coexists with the artificial. The piled up food remains with those arranged by Horowitz, which held up their shape, impassible in the face of electricity lack and the absence of calorific energy of the foodstuff. Dry and vacuous, retired if not deceased, they bade farewell with no beat and no other light than that of the sun.

We observe this massive, comical and critical intervention without the affection that artists in the first section were bringing with their occupied homely fridges. The inactivity of each of the heaped refrigerators dissolves the connection that normally exists between our willpower and its content. Even so, this is also a social portrait of us, this time focusing in that which endures more than flesh, the skeleton of our repasts.

Another artist that has been dedicated to include out of service refrigerators in his installations is the German author Thomas Rentmeister. Covered up in Penaten baby cream as well as with Styrofoam or polystyrene, Rentmeister has introduced them spread or arranged as a tower, gathered in nature or in an art gallery. As matter volumes, they give shape to compositions of a magnetic immaculate appearance.

This recycling effort give rise to sculptures that the artist leaves spotless, coating the refrigerators in skin cream for neonates, providing them with a new birth with another identity. Every time, he displays them with their doors closed and even sealed together with an insulation component. Their previous usage remains obsolete then. Only their exterior surfaces, their external volume, interact with its surroundings. Braced to slabs and walls or mutually supporting each other, they form a neat cemetery of appliances.



The air-tightness the machines procure seems to be meant to inter the prior life they had, standing now untouchable in front of us. In constructions like *Muda* (2011 and 2012), the sculptor induces an imposing ambience where the refrigerators strike as beautiful. They reveal against our gastric appetite, shut to our mouths.

In *Untitled* (2012) (fig. 9), Rentmeister employs part of the interior components of the refrigerators, their shelves. Working as lines, they draw a prism to assemble a room. It is another reconfiguration of the fridge, this time delimited by its interior partitions, lighter and more permeable. The mounts that used to save the products are converted, altogether, into a self-supporting framework. The empty shelves transform their use and they annul its identity as nourishment bearers.

Both, the monumental *Fridgehenge* by Horowitz, and the works by Rentmeister, in addition to alluding to the consumer society and the growing quandary of their residues, discover another identity for this appliance. In *Nearly 100 fridges in a corner* (fig. 9), each unit is a pilaster. Forming steps, it's an amphitheatre custom-made for the Australian Greenway Art Gallery in a changing ascent, with potential to be transmuted into a place of stay and game.

In any of those building hypothesis, those fridges have been completely devoided of the responsibility of providing us with edible food. The attentive look we give when a refrigerator opens up with a hopeful hunger is nullified by Rentmeister. He breaks the brain connection we establish between fridge and food, and give them an identity beyond the alimentary altar.

With their transformations, the two artists pervert the aesthetic and ethic that is usually given to monuments. In that exertion, rather than generating a waste burial, as it could be expected from the premise they are based on, they create sepulchres with compositional and political strength.

FIGURE 09 » Diptych: [left] Thomas Rentmeister, *Untitled*, 2012, refrigerator shelves, cable ties, 190 x 210 x 210 cm, [right] Thomas Rentmeister, *Nearly 100 fridges in a corner*, 2008, refrigerators, Penaten baby cream, Styrofoam, 705 x 536 x 370 cm.

Conclusions

The analysis undertaken highlights the private and personal nature of the object in question. Therefore, the artists intervene with a lurid desire to violate a personal space and make it public. Those art works that unfold the appliance's doors, access a private property. In a different way, those which show fridge in abandonment, down the street or in a public room, also turn it into a morbid object, as they decontextualize an individual fragment linked to a digestive system. That aggression is uncomfortable at the same time that seductive, since it reveals an intimate place we frequent although remains, as our stomach, hidden.

Each of the commented works belongs to different movements. While López and Eggleston are close to intimist art or even confessional art, Ushioda documents a reality with a voyeuristic approach. Different paths are those traced by Chadwick or Horowitz, who bring reflections with a social connotation. At the same time, Sam Chermayeff Office project might not have the experimental intentions attributed to it in this text. Standing in another line is the surrealism and minimalism of Rentmeister, who express in a unique language.

Despite of some works being parallel to an intimist outlook and others pursuing beauty or activism, they all share an identification of the fridge as an organic object, in the sense that it takes part in the biological processes of those who owned it, and in the sense that is part of us, of our collective identity. All of them assume, intrinsically, that it is an organ (or device), who plays a role in the chain of action of our maintenance activities. An abundant number of art works are featured by the refrigerator, from which only a few have been mentioned here. Because of its frequency, it could be appropriate to recognise this as an artistic tendency in the contemporaneity.

Embracing the appliance aesthetic, which tends to come off as vulgar and less noble than a marble worktop or wooden furniture, the artists brought in this journey have confessed certain vulnerability at the refrigerator's feet. In an act of humbleness and acknowledgement, they kneel before it. As a visual ode to conclude this text consolidating the symbolic meaning of the protagonist of the analysis, a series of photographs have been produced revering the current pre-stomach of the author of this research (fig. 10). This physical nearness is also intended to identify the emotional proximity we sometimes keep with habitual gadgets, as well as recognise our current technological dimension.



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FIGURE 10 » Diptych: *Reverence and hug to a double door domestic refrigerator*, 2024, author's photographs.

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