

GALERIE KRINZINGER SEILERSTÄTTE 16 1010 WIEN
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SECUNDINO HERNÁNDEZ

TODAY

OPENING: September 16, 2015, 7pm

DURATION: September 16 – October 31, 2015

The Artist is present at the opening.

It's a natural and useful process. As the career of an artist becomes consolidated, his work is subject to a discourse that facilitates knowledge of the same and determines its popularity. This discourse highlights characteristic elements while silencing and eclipsing others, in order to give order and coherence to the overall reading of the work. Thanks to this task, carried out by gallery owners, critics and curators, success appears to be the logical and happy result of a well-spun narrative in which there are hardly any loose ends and which conveys a sense of agreeable security.

In recent years, we've been able to see how this process has operated on Secundino Hernández's work. In the array of essays, articles and interviews that the specialised media increasingly dedicate to him, prominence is given to his passion for the basic elements of painting: colour, line and plane. Mention is made of his insatiable desire to research and the key role he ascribes to his studio. And of his need to connect with the great pictorial tradition, and, in particular, with the great Spanish masters. Gradually a canonical discourse is being built up that helps the dissemination and understanding of his work.

However, this discourse fails to embrace those aspects of Secundino's imaginary universe that are other, disconcerting and verge on bad taste. References to mass culture, rock music or his liking for dirty jokes are digressions that are difficult to fit in. All can be found, in one form or another, in the drawings by the Madrid painter on show at the Galerie Krinzinger early this autumn.

Among these discordant elements, there is one that passes most people by. Few people know about Secundino's deep fascination for the world of comics. One of his dreams, as yet unfulfilled, is to have a biography in cartoon form tracing the key steps in his career, which is funny, scatological and demystifying. Although this is seldom mentioned, he knows and admires the work of cartoonists like Robert Crumb, Charles Burns or Daniel Clowes, who he has followed extremely closely at certain points of his life.

Notwithstanding, there is barely a trace of this passion for cartoons in his major works. A strange phenomenon that recalls, give or take some obvious differences, the admiration and curiosity that Picasso felt towards George Herriman's comic strip *Krazy Kat* which Gertrude Stein used to read to him on her regular visits. While references to this interest shown by Picasso are few and far between, it's worth asking if the impact of this comic strip on the Malaga-born artist doesn't escape our gaze, overly conditioned by the established discourse.

Fortunately, in the case of Secundino Hernández, his passion for the world of cartoons has happily found a place in his drawings. Here his line is kinetic and evokes persecutions, leaps and jumps and bangs and bumps. Smudges occur like onomatopoeias. Concealed in seeming abstraction, jokers that make us believe that we see faces where they shouldn't be. Occasionally, the precision of the doodle imitates the flat ink of industrial printing that appealed to pop artists so much.

Almost unintentionally, we see something rude in these drawings that makes us laugh, then blush in the sacrosanct *white box* of the gallery. Large cartoons that let us imagine how the painter whiles away his spare time: laughing at silly things, wasting time, tripping over a can of paint and falling head over heels.

Whenever we walk round the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid, Secundino stops in front of *Dream and Lie of Franco* by Picasso. We've seen this strange *comic* together on a host of occasions. Initially, I thought I saw in his gaze just curiosity towards this unusual work. Later, I thought I intuited envy in his gaze towards an achievement that has always fascinated Secundino: adapting pictorial language to that of cartoons.

Over time, I've reached the conclusion that what Secundino was looking for behind the scenes of the well-known prints is the Picasso who enjoyed the comic strip about a cat of indeterminate gender chased by a Dadaist mouse who sublimates his unspeakable desire for the feline by throwing bricks at it.

This exhibition of drawings should be seen, therefore, as an invitation from the artist to discover those elements of his work that in some years' time will be inaccessible in the light of the official

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discourse, which is always more sober and restrained. Given the impossibility of finding a thread that unites the influence of El Greco with a *comic* of dubious morality, art historians and critics are bound to choose the first of these influences. Let's seize this opportunity to enjoy the second, in all its irreverent splendour, and revel in the fun-loving naturalness that this exhibition displays.

Karpov Shelby

Secundino Hernández was born 1975 in Madrid. He lives and works in Madrid and Berlin. 2007 he was artist in residence at the Krinzinger Projekte. His works have been presented in a lot of solo and group shows worldwide, like *Maison Louis Carré, Bazoches-sur-Guyonne, France (2014)*, *Hambre, 4th Edition, Barcelona, Spain (2014)*, *Salon Dahlmann, Berlin, Germany (2013)*, *The Rubell Family Collection, Miami, USA (2013)*, *Berlin-Klondyke Halle 12, Leipzig, Germany (2013)*, *Centro de Arte La Regenta, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain (2012)*, *Roger Raveel Museum, Belgium (2012)*, *Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2012)*, *Art Center Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA (2011)*, *Kunsthalle Kempten, Kempten, Germany (2011)*, *Bienal de La Paz, Bolivia (2007)*. His works are currently to be seen in a big solo show at the, YUZ Museum, Shanghai until October 11, 2015.

Solo Exhibitions by Secunino Hernández at Gallery Krinzinger:

Four Season: Between Winter and Spring, 2014

Indisigno, 2010

Secundino Hernández, Krinzinger Projekte (Artist in Residency) 2007

Group exhibitions with Secundino Hernández at Galerie Krinzinger,
Aktualität eines Mediums, 2010

Karpov Shelby (Madrid, 1974). Over the last fifteen years, Karpov Shelby has been a virtual personality, pop reporter and art critic. He has been involved in underground cultural projects such as record labels, blogs and fanzines. He is currently in charge of the publishing house for graphic art, *La Dominación Mundial*, which promotes up-and-coming Spanish artists.