

MIGUEL AGUIRRE

El sueño de la razón / The dream of reason

From the 10th of May to the 20th of June, 2018

Private view on the 10th of May at 8 pm.

This is the fourth time Miguel Aguirre (Lima, 1973) is exhibiting at the Pilar Serra Gallery. He first showed a series of paintings in memoriam, paying tribute to the victims of terrorist attacks or violent events that displayed the most devastating side of our society in 2008. The artist's working method consisted of picking out some photographs that appeared in the press after the Atocha attack and making 22 small format paintings based on these, attempting to seek out the authentic background, the soul of the missing people, with a clear intention to pay tribute to them.

Three years later, Aguirre presented *Otoño, verano, invierno*, (*Autumn, summer, winter*) at a time when the Arab uprisings were front page news and which, due to the complexity of using critical objectivity to analyse them through the images taken by the mass media, the artist proposed the idea of basing his paintings on three films that told the story of the events that took place in Arab countries at different moments in history, reproducing oil paintings of some of the images, extrapolating them from their context (film and history) and offering them as a metaphor of the uprisings.

In 2014 we exhibited *Blancas juegan y ganan* (*White plays and wins*), an expression commonly used in the specialised chess-playing press. Each of the paintings presented well-known political leaders and what could be considered their opposites: heroes and antiheroes. As in a game of chess, where the player must develop a strategy with consequences that could influence the future of a game many moves ahead, politicians dominate the power relationships and establish a series of tactics and strategies in such a way that the movements of one player force the other player to react.

This time, Miguel Aguirre, who now resides in Lima (Peru) after living in Spain for fourteen years, has brought together two series of work: *Pinturas negras* (*Black paintings*) and *El sueño de la razón* (*The dream of reason*).

Pinturas negras, a series in small format is both literally and metaphorically dark, since Aguirre has made very little use of white oil paint and the reading the represented images is somewhat difficult due to the particular pictorial veil that covers the paintings. These are his particular series of "black paintings" in which he uses several images to represent the actions carried out by the government of George W. Bush and its hawks immediately after the terror attacks of the 11th of September, 2001: war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq, the overthrowing of Saddam Hussein and the subsequent delirium: torture and harassment in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, mass spying using the USA Patriot Act and the appearance of Assange, Snowden, Chelsea Manning and of the Wiki Leaks portal.

El sueño de la razón, once again an unmistakable allusion to Goya, is a series the analysis of which forces the formal aspect and its representation to become reconciled. Because recklessness does not seem to have necessarily taken over these works when causing a series of re-compositions, discrepancies, duplicities, partialities, unusual glazes in Aguirre's pictorial work, but rather this lack of intellect, this break in understanding, we find by "recognizing" those portrayed. Trump, Putin, Maduro, the Fujimoris (along with many others who are missing!) symbolise the petty and nefarious ideas behind the current political practice and in which, apparently and tragically, the electorate gives their significant support (if we take notice of certain polls). Good judgement is found, therefore in a state of lethargy. And in the case of Catalonia, which affects us directly, this is another example of this numbness and absurdity – to use a euphemism, of the situation. A great monster flying both Spanish and independent flags appears before our eyes and as if it were drawing No. 1 of the Rorschach test and this is because reason has gone to sleep.

Miguel Aguirre studied painting at the Faculty of Art at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. He obtained the Diploma in Advanced Studies at the Faculty of Fine Art at the Universidad de Barcelona. He has exhibited in different museums, institutions and galleries in Peru, Brazil, Ecuador, Switzerland, the United States, Holland, Chile and Spain. He has won many prizes and mentions, such as the Plastic Arts award from the Fundación Telefónica; the Banco de Crédito de Perú Prize and in 2017, the National Prize for Visual Arts of Trujillo (Peru).

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