

THE HUNTER'S DREAM -SECTION-

24.03.2024 - 12.05.2024

Galleria Continua Beijing is pleased to present a new solo show by the artist Juan Araujo. On display a group of oil paintings presenting a narrative series inspired by the figure of collector Ernst Beyeler through a project started in 2020 on the occasion of Art Basel Unlimited.

The artistic path of the Venezuelan artist Juan Araujo (1971, Caracas) has stood out for its depth of research and reflection on the history of Modernism and its utopias, namely the impact of modern Latin American architecture on society, in political, constructional or symbolic terms.

In 2020, for Basel Unlimited, Araujo has conceived a pavilion in collaboration with a young Portuguese architect, Mariana Barbosa, in key ways alluding to Renzo Piano's Beyeler Foundation, whose architecture and founder's story created the basis for the research into this project entitled The Hunters' Dream.

In 1997, Ernst Beyeler (1921 - 2010), a celebrated Swiss collector born in Basel, when asked in an interview with *Connaissance des Arts* why he continued to collect, he replied: "In order to find another good painting. I am still a hunter, which was my pleasure through all these years." Besides being one of the most important collectors of modern art of his day, Ernst Beyeler was also a significant - and extremely dedicated - collector of African and Oceanic art. The project sets out this very phrase and the idea of the 'hunter's dream' - or an obsession with collecting - as its starting point, exploring, and mordantly critiquing, a number of themes related to the

influence of African and Oceanic art on modern art, to the Eurocentrism and the cultural appropriation, utopias and fabled encounters with the other, nature, art and architecture, deliberately calling to mind an exhibition that the Beyeler Foundation organised in 2009: "Visual Encounters: Africa, Oceania and Modern Art", a show conceived as an attempt to go beyond the 'primitivism' approach and which acknowledged the relevance of non-European art on its own terms, and not just on the terms of the hegemonic Western art movements.

Through this project, Araujo embarks upon a further engagement with - and questioning of - entrenched, manipulative cultural fictions and their seats of power and influence. This series of paintings in part reassessing key works from the "Visual Encounters" exhibition and essentialist readings of the Beyeler Foundation itself, as well as other ironic "depictions" of the "European artist at work", are a trenchant commentary on the currency of ideas that to this day motivate art production, and why the hunt continues, even if today it is couched in flattering, self-congratulatory language.

About the artist:

Juan Araujo (born 1971 in Caracas) has pursued over the last 20 years a highly personal investigation of the history of Western culture, art history, and Modernism by making hyper-realistic paintings based on found images. Araujo lives and works in Lisbon.

Araujo has exhibited widely internationally

including solo presentations at PEER, London, UK (2019); Inhotim Center for Contemporary Art, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2013) and Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporânea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain (2008).

His work has also featured in numerous group exhibitions and biennials including Healing and Repairing, Bienal de arte contemporânea de Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal (2017); Roberto Burle Marx: Brazilian Modernist, Jewish Museum, New York, USA (2016); United States of Latin America, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit, Michigan, USA (2015); The insides are on the outside, curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Casa de Vidrio, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2013); the Aichi Triennial, Nagoya, Japan (2010), Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, São Paulo (2009); the Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates (2009); the Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2007); the São Paulo Biennial (2006); the San Diego Museum of Art (2005) and the American National Society, New York (2005). Araujo was included in the group exhibition Galerie de l'Époque at Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, and also in the Twentieth Anniversary Exhibition, London, England (2015).

His work is found in public collections including Tate, London, UK; Museum of Modern Art of New York, New York, USA; Jumex Collection, Mexico City, Mexico; Inhotim Center for Contemporary Art, Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela; Museu de Arte Contemporâneo de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela; Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporânea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela; Art Now International Collection, San Francisco, USA; Fundación Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela; Cisneros Collection, Caracas; Venezuela; Berezdivin Collection, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

About the gallery:

Founded in 1990 in San Gimignano, Italy, GALLERIA CONTINUA has expanded its locations to Beijing, Les Moulins, Havana, São Paulo, Rome, Paris, and Dubai. Remaining faithful to the spirit of perpetual evolution, and committed to engaging the widest possible audiences in contemporary art, GALLERIA CONTINUA has built a strong identity through its bonds and experiences, thriving away from the conventional urban centres, in completely unexpected yet timeless locations.

Galleria Continua / Beijing

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Opens from Tuesday to Sunday
11.00 am - 6.00 pm.

For further information on the exhibition and photographic material:

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