



GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS

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JUAN ARAUJO

When They Come Alive

Opening Saturday 11th September 2021, via del Castello 11, 6pm-8.30pm
Until 6th January 2022, Monday to Sunday, 10am-1pm, 2-7pm, by appointment only
To ensure maximum safety, it is necessary to book your visit to the exhibition using the appropriate form on galleriacontinua.com. At the entrance, it is necessary to show a vaccine pass.

Galleria Continua is pleased to host a new solo show by Juan Araujo; on display are a group of new oil paintings containing refined narratives that present the viewer with an artistic pathway inspired by the work of Cy Twombly.

The research of the Venezuelan painter Juan Araujo (1971, Caracas) investigates the history of Western culture and the history of art through a hyper-realistic reproduction of images found in books, magazines, photographs and online. However, the artist's work doesn't just make reference, it focuses on history, images and their indelible permanence over time, through different methods of replication, adaptation and dissemination.

In this exhibition, Juan Araujo presents a group of works that comes from a careful study of some photographs taken in 1966 by Horst P. Horst for the November issue of Vogue, which accompanied an article on the American painter Cy Twombly. The photographs portray the interiors of Twombly's residence in Rome, spaces bathed in intense white light that revealed a visual balance between the painter's large canvases, Roman sculptures and eighteenth-century decorations.

Araujo's works come from a photographic image, where a small portion, focused and cropped, becomes a new pictorial fragment. Of the splendid decoration of these domestic spaces, Araujo preserves and frames some significant details; what interests him mainly is the composition of certain objects and what this composition reveals, namely the longstanding aesthetic rivalry between painting and sculpture.

The title of the exhibition, *When They Come Alive*, is a verse by Constantin Kavafis (Alexandria, Egypt 1863-1933), a Greek poet much loved by Twombly, with whom he shares a propensity for the great universal themes of love, art, beauty and death.

In the critical essay that Leopoldo Iribarren dedicates to the Araujo exhibition in San Gimignano we read: "(...) It is not surprising that today Juan Araujo, one of the contemporary artists who with greater wit has explored the reflective virtualities of representation, explores the image of melancholy in some of its possible manifestations. The main correlative of this investigation is offered by a constellation of images relating to Cy Twombly (...) Greek poetry and mythology, Roman emperors, Renaissance figures,

monumental architecture: the objects represented in these images are, for Twombly, intermediaries, memorials and, at the same time, witnesses of the erosion of matter and its meanings. Retrieving the past in a contemporary key, passing from one form of “language” to another, from one medium to another, in order to capture complex meanings, is a fundamental trait of Twombly’s work with which Araujo has long established a fertile and reflective harmony. (...) In this exhibition his attention is focused on three central themes: the relationship between text and image, the relationship between sculpture and painting and the evanescence of the image, three long-standing problems of the history and theory of art that Araujo explores transversely, through the figure of the melancholy artist ”.

Juan Araujo was born in 1971 in Caracas, Venezuela. He lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal. Juan has exhibited extensively internationally, including solo shows such as *Measurable distances of space and air*, PEER, London, UK (2019); *Mineiranas*, Inhotim Center for Contemporary Art, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2013); *A Través*, Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain (2008).

His work has also appeared in numerous group and biennial exhibitions including *Southern Geometries, from Mexico to Patagonia*, Fondation Cartier pour dell’arte contemporain, Paris, France (2018); *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 interiors are on the outside*, curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Casa de Vidrio, San Paolo, Brazil (2013); the Triennial of Aichi, 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 San Paolo Biennial (2006); the San Diego Museum of Art (2005) and the American National Society, New York (2005). Araujo was recently included in the group exhibition *25 Years* at the Stephen Freedman Gallery in London, England (2020).

His work can be found in public collections including Tate, London, England; 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 Contemporánea, 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 and the Berezdivin Collection, San Juan, Puerto Rico.