

José Gutiérrez-Solana
POR LA CALLE DEL CEMENTERIO
Alberto García-Alix

September 8 – October 28, 2022

Leandro Navarro Art Gallery presents the work of painter **José Gutiérrez-Solana** (1886-1945) and photographer **Alberto García-Alix (b.1956)** in dialogue.

Although both artists are separated in time and technique, their works share an interest in the more sordid and dramatic aspects of contexts related to death, erotism, religion, and different forms of masquerade. The exhibition title “Por la calle del cementerio” (Down the Street of the Cemetery) comes from the essay that writer, poet, and dramaturg **Angélica Liddell** has specially written for the **exhibition catalog**, available online at **leandro-navarro.com**. As she writes: “The Cantabrian and the Leonese chose the honesty of the outskirts. The outskirts, the slums, the street of the cemetery, all those edges are part of their political rebellion. Our own terrors and misfortunes, which can also be those of the painter and of the photographer, find shelter in those outskirts. The backgrounds of José are the walls of Alberto (...) We walk down the street of the cemetery hand in hand with Alberto and José, hand in hand with ourselves, the street of the cemetery is the cruel gorge of beauty”.

Dates: From September 8 to October 28, 2022

Opening: September 8, 8pm - 10 pm

(In the context of Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend 2022)

Visiting hours:

Monday to Friday: 10 am-2 pm & 5 pm-8 pm

Saturdays: Appointment required

Special opening hours on September 8: 10 am-10 pm

More information and catalog: www.leandro-navarro.com

José Gutiérrez-Solana

Solana was born in Madrid on February 28, 1886. His vocation for drawing emerged already in his school days. His family house was robbed by a troublemaker wearing a mask during a carnival celebration, an experience which terrorized young Solana, who would be haunted by this memory throughout his entire life. He was deeply affected by the death of his father in 1898. At the age of 14, he entered the San Fernando Academy of Fine Arts, where Anatomy (together with bulls) would become one of his favorite themes.

Having completed his studies, he presented his first works at the National Exhibition of Fine Arts. During a gathering at the Café de Levante he met Zuloaga, who praised his work. In 1909 the family moved to Santander. Solana traveled often and finished his book *Madrid. Scenes and customs*. At the Café Pombo of Madrid, he met the intellectual figures of the time and conceived his famous canvas *The coffee gathering Pombo*. Gomez de la Serna published the first biography of Solana in 1918. He took part, with many of his works, at the Royal Academy of London, and, later, the Santander Foundation organized his first individual exhibition.

In 1923 he published *Madrid Street*, devoted to Zuloaga. He took part in international exhibitions like the Venice Biennale, the Twenty-Third International Exhibition of Painting, and the Carnegie Institute of Pittsburgh. In Madrid he exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1927, and a year later he traveled to Paris to open an exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune room of the Faubourg Saint Honoré, supported by Edgar Neville. The Parisian adventure did not yield great results for him, but in Spain, several institutions acquired his pieces, and he took part in the Exhibition of Spanish Art at The Hague, Amsterdam, and New York.

In 1930 he was awarded first prize in Fine Arts in Madrid and exhibited in Pittsburgh, Oslo, Chicago, and the Venice Biennale. He won first prize in the National Portrait Contest (1933). On his return to Paris in 1936 he obtained a resounding success, and the French government acquired several of Solana's pieces. In 1943 the Circle of Fine Arts grants him the Gold Medal. Madrid's Estilo Gallery would be the last one to house the work of the living artist. The Santander Bank Collection and the Reina Sofia National Art Museum, as well as the Cultural Foundation Mapfre, exhibited his work in subsequent years. He died on June 24th, 1945.

Alberto García-Alix

Alberto García-Alix was born on March 22, 1956, in León, Spain. When he was eleven years old, he moved with his family to live in Madrid, where he currently resides. His first negatives date back to 1976. At the beginning of the eighties, he made his first individual exhibitions in Madrid at galleries such as the Galería Buades and the Galería Moriarty, as well as other international venues such as the Portfolio Gallery in London.

During the first edition of PhotoEspaña, in 1998, he showcased a great retrospective exhibition, with great public and critical success. He received the National Photography Prize from the Spanish Ministry of Culture in 1999, at which time he began working with the Juana de Aizpuru Gallery in Spain and the Kamel Mennour Gallery in France.

Between 2003 and 2006 he lived in Paris where he created a video trilogy alternating photographic and filmed images that represents the incursion of the artist in the video format, a medium which he continues to develop to this day. In 2009 he presented a retrospective exhibition at the National Museum of Reina Sofia Art Center as well as the Ullens Center in Beijing and the Maison de la Photographie in Moscow. In the later years, he has exhibited at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, at the Photographers' Gallery in London, at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Leon, and in the Tabacalera Art Promotion in Madrid.

His most recent project is "Fierce Expressionism", a collection of unpublished photographs, taken over the last years. This work has been exhibited in 2018 in various countries (Uruguay, Argentina, and the Dominican Republic), and in 2019 at the Multimedia Art Museum in Moscow (Russia). In 2019 he received the Gold Medal for Merit in Fine Arts by the Spanish Ministry of Culture.

His work can be found in large international collections such as the National Museum of Art Reina Sofía (Spain); Fonds Nationales d'Art Contemporain (France) and Deutsche Börse (Germany), among others.

García-Alix has combined his photographic activity with that of the publisher; he is the founder of the cultural magazine "El Canto de la Creación" (1989-1997), and more recently the co-founder of the publishing house Cabeza de Chorlito, together with Frédérique Bangerter, the same house that has published some of his most recent creations: *Paradise of the believers* (2011); *Diaporamas* (2012); *MOTO* (2015) and *Motorcycle Family Circus* nº1 and nº2 (2016, 2018). His last book, *Fantasías en el Prado* (La Fábrica, 2022), includes a series of photographs combined with Prado Museum paintings using a double-exposure technique. They have also been exposed at the Madrid Botanic Garden in the

context of the PHotoEspaña Festival 2022, coinciding with the Enaire Foundation 2022 Award for all his career.