





CIRIA

RORSCHACH HEADS



MY FATHER

(17 December 1932 - 26 March 2010)

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152,5 cm). Collection of the artist

CIRIA

RORSCHACH HEADS

CIRIA RORSCHACH HEADS

Exhibition curated by Carole Newhouse

Edited by Tf Editores XXXXXXXXXX

Essays: Carole Newhouse, Donald Kuspit, Carlos Delgado, Esther Esteban and Robert C. Morgan

Photographs: José M. Ciria and José F. Lorén

Translations from Spanish: Justin Peterson

Graphic Design: Javier Remedios

Copyright of the essays: The writers

Copyright of the images: Ciria – VEGAP

Thanks to:

Stux Gallery, New York

Cordeiros Gallery, Porto

Christophers Cutts Gallery, Toronto

Arteinversión Space, Madrid

Artist's Acknowledgements:

Carole Newhouse, Graziella Marchicelli, Alex R. Gregory, Titto Ferreira, Alfredo Carrilero, Montse Camacho, Stefan Stux, Andrea Schnabl, Donald Kuspit, Carlos Delgado, Robert C. Morgan, Agostinho Cordeiro, Christopher Cutts, Erin E. Holland, Paula Alonso, Juan Pablo Alonso, Luis Sánchez-Guerra, Esther Esteban, Javier Remedios and all the collectors

All drawings in this book are untitled (except mentioned), and are made with charcoal, markers, ink and pencil on 100 Lb Bristol Vellum paper, 14 x 11 inches (35,6 x 27,9 cm). Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010/2011

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the written permission of the artist or Tf Editores

Printed in Spain

D. L.: XXXXXXXXXX

I.S.B.N.: XXXXXXXXXX



11	Ciria - Rorshach Heads
	Carole Newhouse
49	Testing and Projecting the Self: Ciria's Rorschach Paintings
	Donald Kuspit
113	Rorschach Heads
	Carlos Delgado
157	Ciria: Painting to Stir the Conscience
	Esther Esteban
193	The Execution of the Soul: Recent Paintings by Jose Manuel Ciria
	Robert C. Morgan
241	Biography
	José Manuel Ciria





Ciria - Rorshach Heads

Carole Newhouse

“The Painter’s Brush consumes his dreams”. Yeats

Life is a Rorschach test; it is all in how you see things and what you experience in life.

Ciria’s paintings require you to look, to see, to visit and revisit in order to understand his visual language. His paintings are intelligent, demanding and engaging. The texture, colors, size and subject matter require your attention. They, like us, are individual, no two the same, unique and complex. Ciria presents a narrative and we construct our own story based on our engagement with the painting and what we bring in terms of our own personal psychology.

Ciria’s early work was figurative and although he was experimenting, analyzing and working toward abstraction, it took time. Finally in the late 80’s he broke through and the stains burst forth from his canvases with energy and sensuality, color and eroticism. They were floating off of the canvas. Ciria became known for the abstract grids and stains and collectors noticed and began to follow him as an important contemporary artist.

Ciria made the courageous move to New York in 2005 from Madrid after living for a time in Manchester, Paris, Rome and Tel Aviv. It began an incredible journey, which has been intense and poetic. It is spiritual both artistically and personally.

It takes time to find your bearings when you move to a new country, and Ciria not knowing the language well or the culture of the people, with few friends to show him the way, began to experience New York. It was a parade of faces with no identities. They are shapes and sizes of heads with no features, no emotion, floating past us. Ships passing in the night with no connectivity.

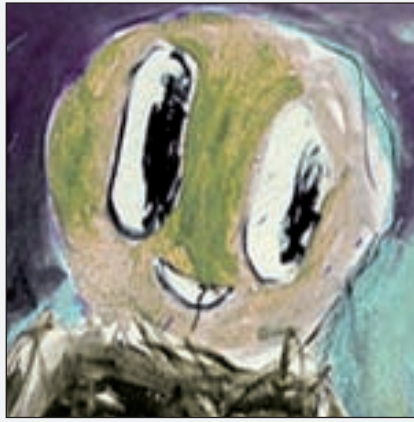
Who we are as people are impacted by our environment and experiences that we collect along the way, little memories that we file away and draw upon when they are needed. That which is around us influences us; people, literature, music, color. Art, sounds, family, friends.

Faces we pass everyday in the subway, in the street, on buses and in markets. Who are they, who are we? The chaos of the times, technology, stress, global connectivity, relationships, time or lack thereof. The persistence of time and the everyday demands, affect us daily. There is little time to dream our dreams. We feel the isolation of being alone in a world full of people.

Many times in his career Ciria returns to the heads, which he started in the 90’s as more ethereal. The heads then began to morph into masks. The masks were lacking an identity, almost alien, as one would feel being displaced from all that is familiar and is now in a new and unfamiliar environment.



Eva Hesse. 1960



Andre Butzer. 2008



José M. Ciria. 2006

As with the early heads and masks, they made one uncomfortable without context, there was a mysterious presence one couldn't quite touch that was palatable and yet elusive. The identities were hidden, as one can see in the earlier paintings, *Cabeza de Rorschach* (2000) or *Cabeza sobre fondo rojo* (2004). Disguise, concealment, the ambiguity of putting on a mask to hide one's face and therefore one's identity.

Ancient cultures believe the mask is the dwelling place of the spirit. It represents our soul. Are we the viewers responsible to release the spirit trapped inside or does the artist, Ciria, by capturing the essence in the painting release the spirit? Examples of the influence of the masks go back to the Cycladic heads at Easter Island, early rock sculptures by indigenous peoples, the Noh Masks of Japanese theater, Masks of ancient tribes, mythological beings, ritualistic, abstract, without emotion, the dwelling place of the spirit it represents.

Ancient, futuristic, almost alien-like, what are the faces saying to us in their primal colors? Black, White and Red. It is said that black in a painting emotes dark, mysterious, unknown forces; red, danger, passion, life force; white positive, peaceful and purity. The more "primitive" tribal peoples in the world usually started out from the beginning with these colors. In linguistic terms anthropologists say every culture has started off in describing colors as, Black and White or Dark and Light.

Black and white being the crossing line for something and nothingness combined with red, being the life force. It's an interesting Primal, and sometimes-Jungian theme about colors.

When Ciria introduces us to a painting, it is not possible to know what personal or emotional associations impact him or conversely might be generated for the viewer.

John Locke, the English philosopher, believed that "humans were autonomous individuals who, although living in a social setting, could not be articulated as a herd or social animal. The ability to reason and reflect, although universal, acts as an explanation for individuality. All reason and reflection is based on personal experience and reference. Personal experience must be completely individual as no one can experience anything quite the same as another."

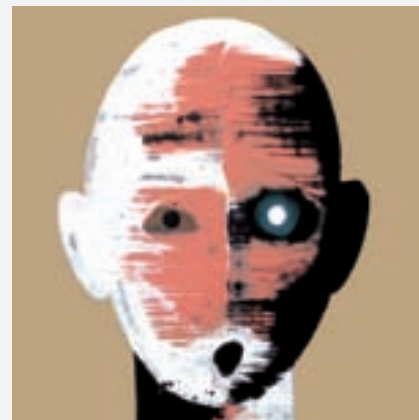
Do the faces want us to know them, are they knowingly hiding or are they screaming to be released from their hiding place behind the mask. Billy Joel made an album called "The Stranger," one of his first and most profound. It suggested there are three masks we all wear, one we show to the world, one to friends and family, those close to us and one only we know. Ciria alludes to the iconology in his later paintings. of the Rorschach Heads. As in the painting, *What I Am, What I Believe I Am, What Others See* from the Schandenmaske Mask Series 2008.



Max Neumann. 2005



Ronny Delrue. 2008



José M. Ciria. 2010

Ciria's *Self-Portrait* (2010) is a very primitive and spiritual painting and with a palette of primarily red and black, it exudes passion, fury and energy. Ciria's *Disturbing Noises* (2010) with the eyes and mouth-sewn shut and *I Can't Answer* (2010) bring to mind Goya's political etchings from *Los Caprichos*, his comment on human existence, where he draws his subjects from distorted dreams. In Goya's Etchings as in Ciria's paintings, we can't speak of what we see, our eyes are closed, it's too painful to speak of it, and we are frightened. In Goya's *Black Paintings* he depicts the mythological Saturn eating his sons. The painting is bizarre and grotesque. Ciria's grotesque painting, "*Talkative Paranoiac*" shows the same emotion and fear and is unsettling and disturbing. One also references Francis Bacon's *Three Studies For Portrait of Lucian Freud* and *Freud's Self-Portrait Reflection* full of turmoil and revealing something of the psychology of the artist himself.

Sometimes life intrudes when we least expect it. Ciria's beloved father became ill in 2009 and Ciria's release, as always, was through his art. Now the strong and forceful, discomforting, paintings took form. Work poured forth from him in an unequalled way. Anger, frustration, fear, anxiety, all permeates from the paintings. The heads are violent, in color and emotion.

Ciria is a painter of voracious appetite for life and he is not afraid through his painting, to reveal his inner realities as in the series Rorschach Heads.

He constantly pushes the envelope and just when you think you have figured out his message there is a twist or turn, you realize you are in a labyrinth and you need to find your own path out. A journey to your own center and back out into the world. There is always a new concept or dynamic to figure out in his paintings.

As Ciria states, "many times I have a problem when I'm painting and I don't know how to resolve it. I take out my sketchpad and I figure it out in drawing." Artists have their own methodology and resolution for what criteria determine a painting's completion.

Ciria spends an enormous amount of time prior to putting a brush to canvas, contemplating the painting, making drawings, preparing the background, drawing the abstract areas on the face. Ciria works on the floor, pouring over the painting. He is a force of energy and concentration. The face then begins to take form when the colors are applied, red, black, orange, green, yellow and finally the spatters of drippings, which are his signature.

An analysis of pictorial space delivers deeper messages within the context of the eyes, frightened and intense, the nose, elongated and profound, the mouth, screaming or sewn shut, the face, emoting so much passion, the colors, vivid and



GLANCE. 2009. Grand Hyatt New York. Project

shocking, and the size, large and imposing. In standing a distance away from Ciria's paintings we see a face and all of the features and yet as we go deeper into the painting and get closer to it, the features dissolve into abstraction. The complexity of the painting is revealed layer by layer like peeling back an onion.

The quality of Ciria's work is ever evolving as he consistently pushes the envelope and himself to new heights. Through the Masks and Rorschach Heads, Ciria stakes his place in the world of contemporary art as one of the most internationally important artists and one to be watched with anticipation.

In looking back over the series of Heads that preceded this exhibition, "Ciria-Rorschach Heads," Ciria's creativity and innovativeness in each of the series makes us reach deeper into our psyches to deal with the emotions he evokes in us as we view the work. He makes us uncomfortable. He is constantly demanding more of himself and us as viewers. The complexities of the paintings intensify our experience, confronting us, demanding we spend more time exploring their meaning.

Ciria bares his soul to us if we are brave enough to look, to see, to take the time to understand.

The Rorschach test is a psychological test in which subjects' perceptions of inkblots are recorded and then analyzed using psychological interpretation, complex scientifically derived algorithms, or both. Some psychologists use this test to examine a person's personality characteristics and emotional functioning.

Carole Newhouse is a curator, sculptor, photographer and writer. She is an experienced art consultant with over 25 years in the art world, advising collectors, museums, estates, galleries, architects and designers. Carole represents artists globally and is responsible for Special Projects for The Art Economist Magazine. She resides in Manhattan, NY.



OH! (SAVAGE DAYS)
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)





MOONFACE

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)

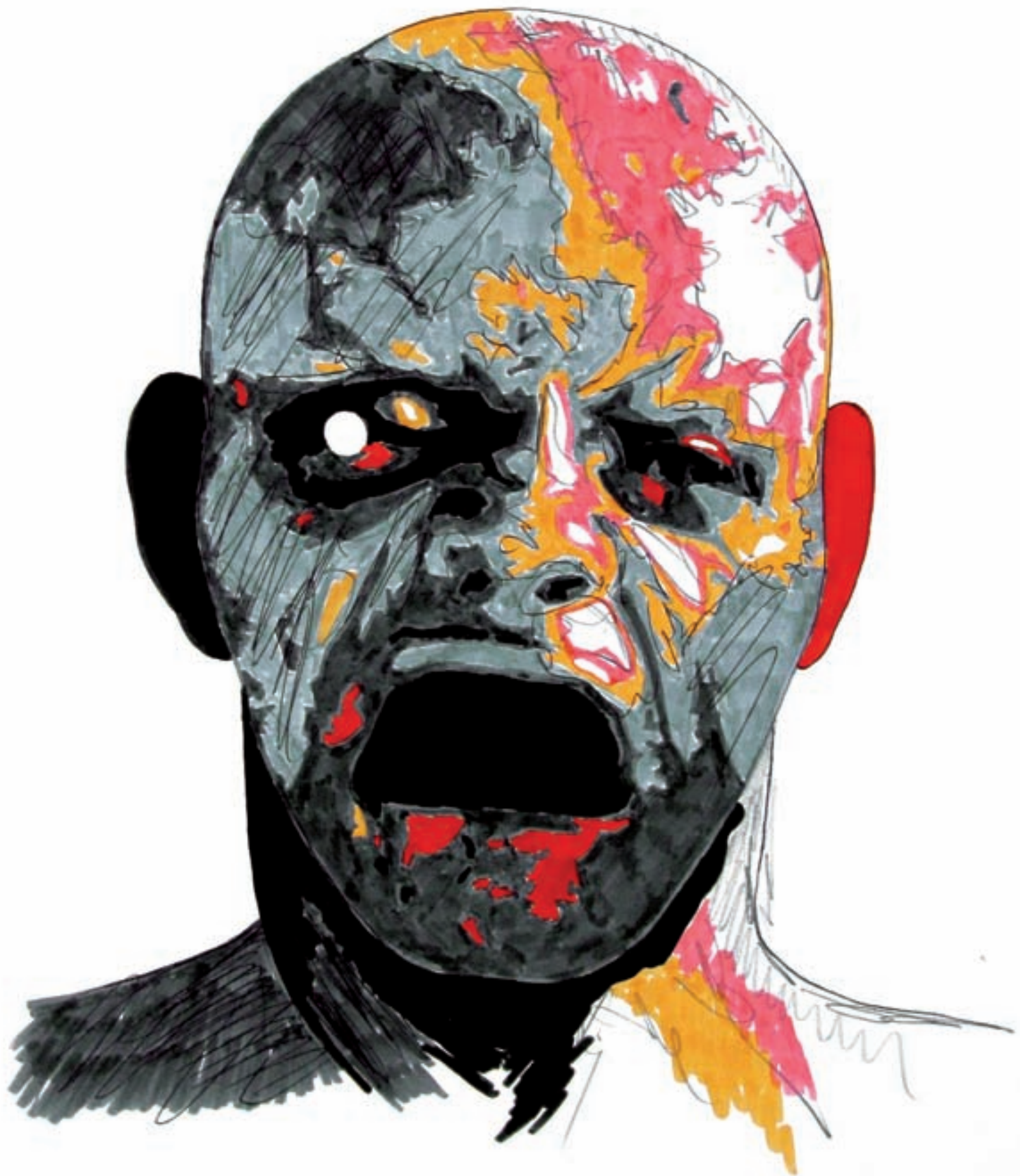


PEELING ONIONS

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



DEAR JAMES
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



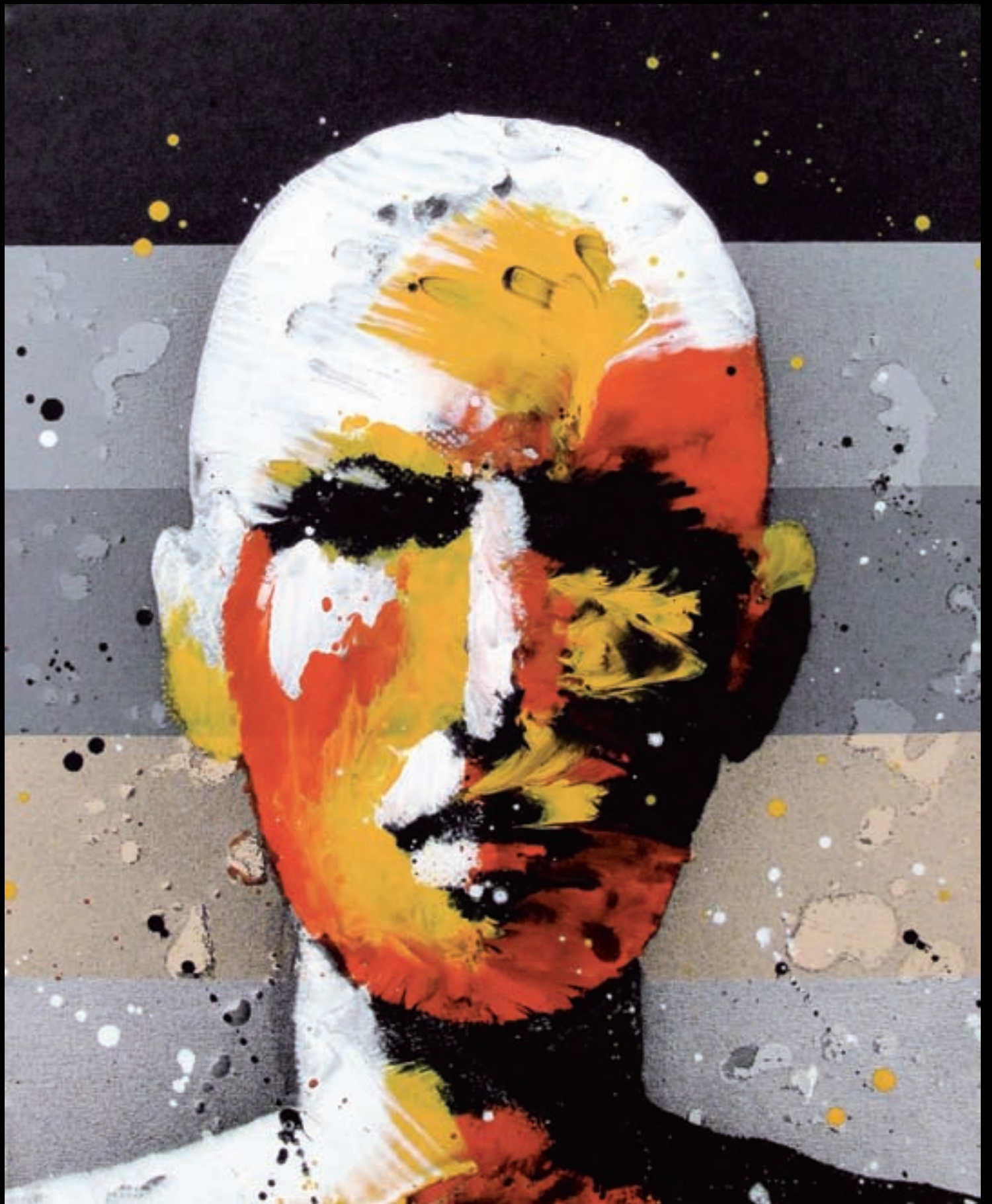




CROSSED-OUT LIAR
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm)

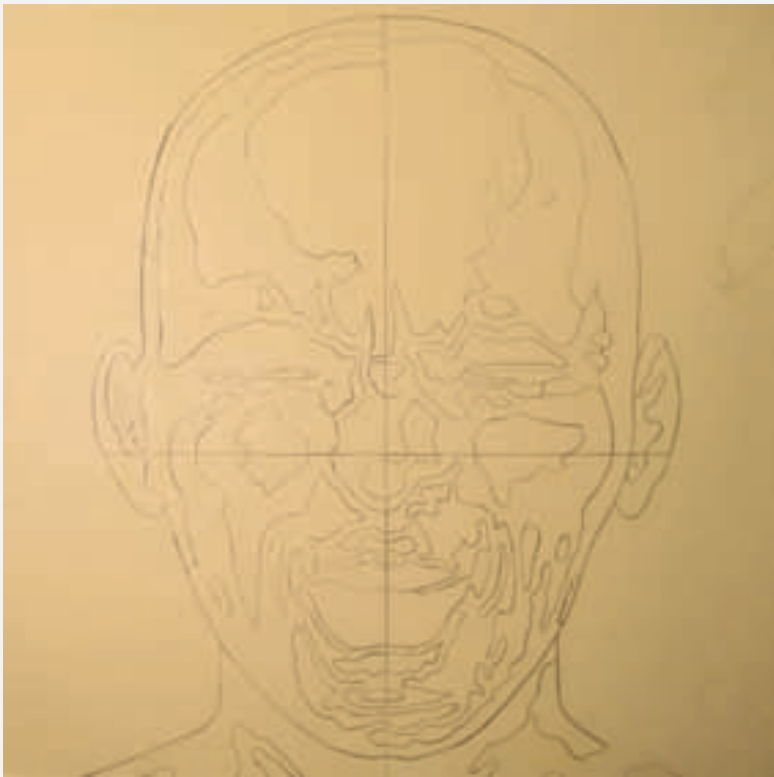


LOOKING FORWARD TO SEE YOU
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)









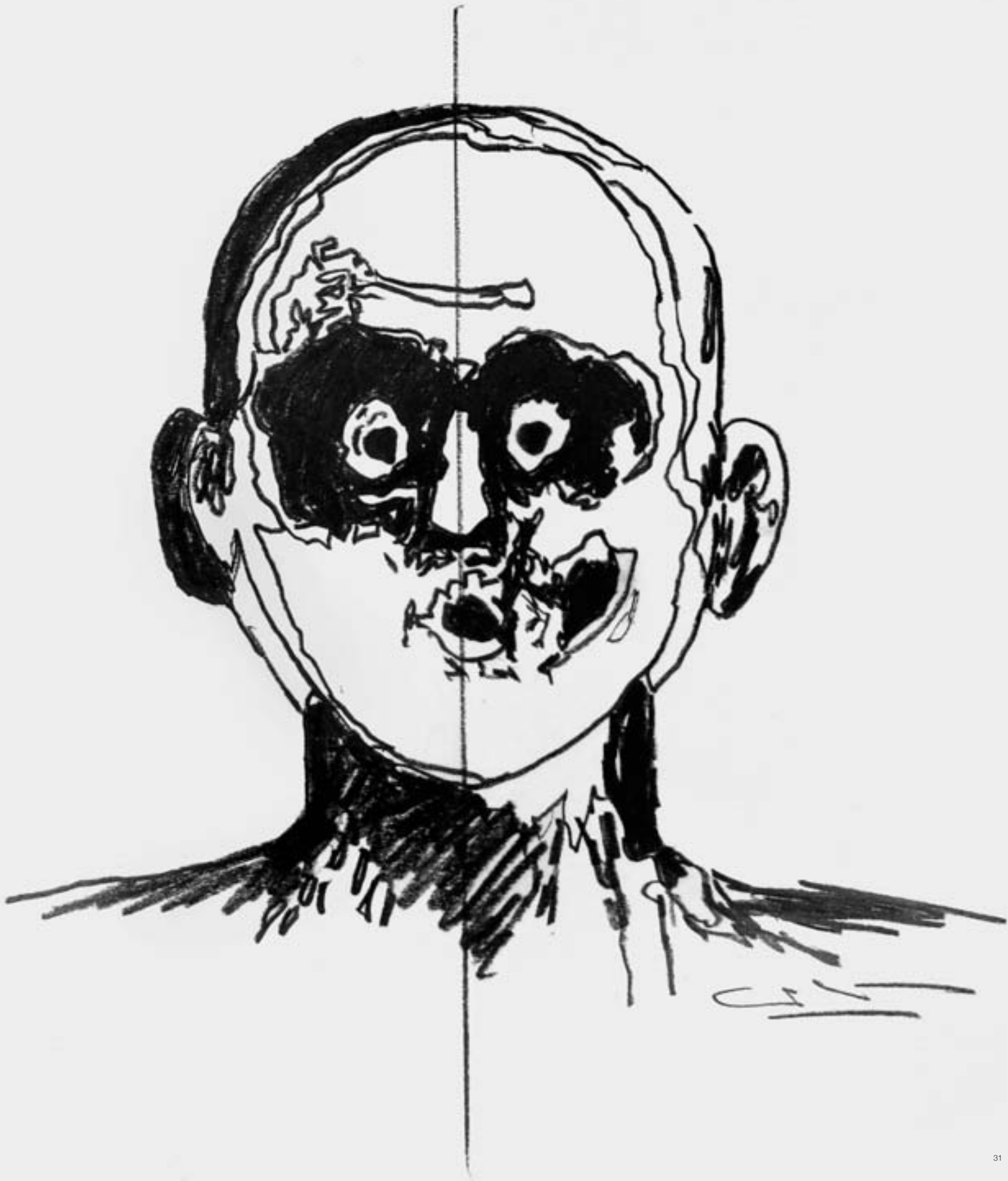
HARMFUL PAIN
Work in progress



HARMFUL PAIN

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York





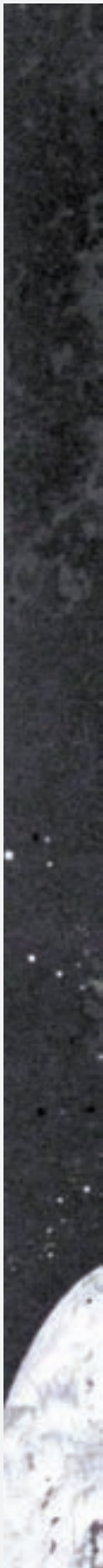


HYPNOTIC GLANCE

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



BETWEEN CLOCK AND BED
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



GRUNDA

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York





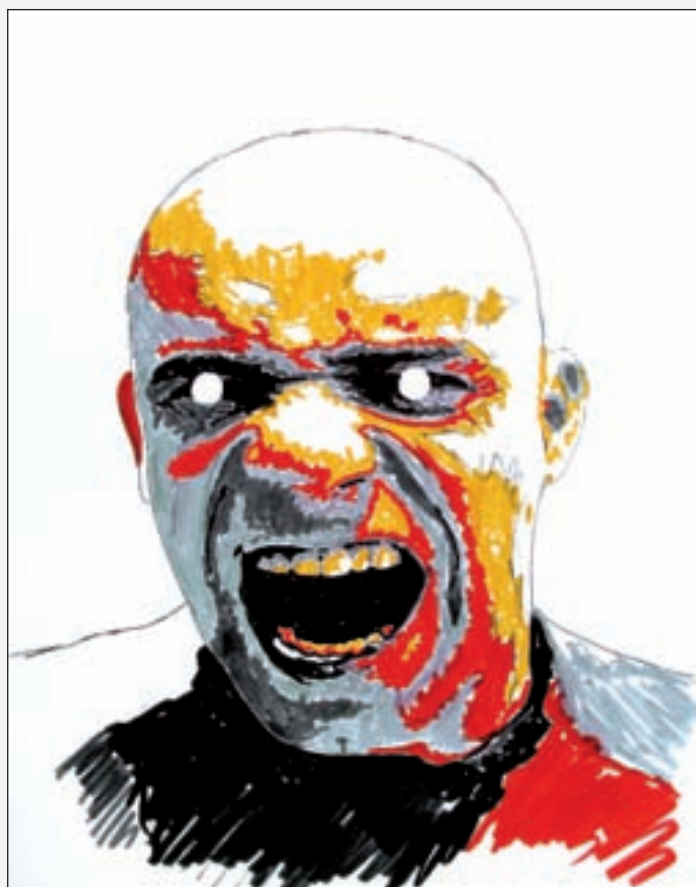
I'M BUSY

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



ANGRY DAYS

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York





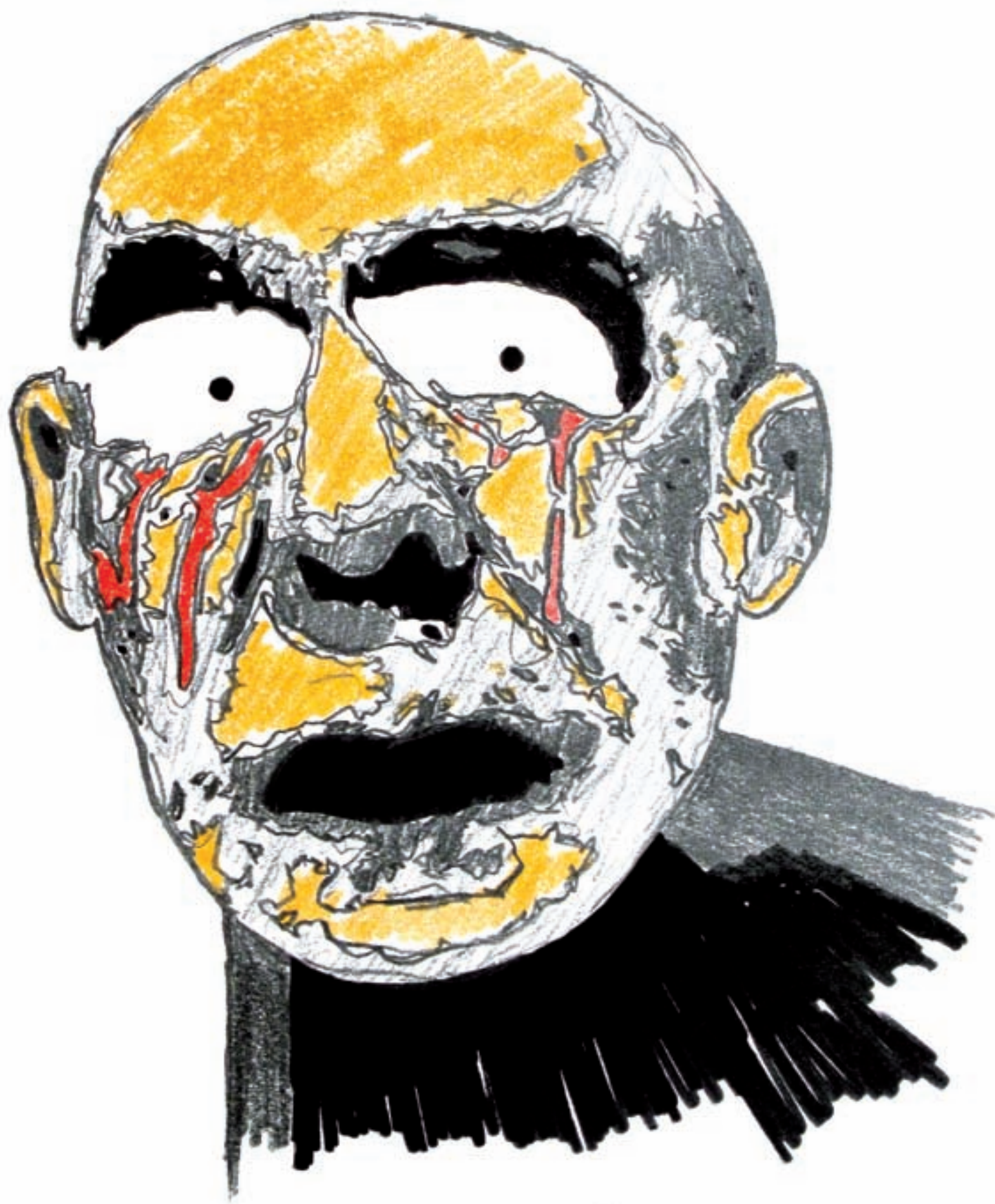


DRUNKARD
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



OH SHIT! (THE PARTY IS OVER)
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York







SELF-PORTRAIT
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil, charcoal and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York







STUDY OF A HEAD I, II, III, IV, V and VI

Testing and Projecting the Self: Ciria's Rorschach Paintings

Donald Kuspit

I want to stress from the very beginning the paralyzing power of anxiety. I believe that it is fairly safe to say that anybody and everybody devotes much of his lifetime, a great deal of his energy—talking loosely—and a good part of his effort in dealing with others, to avoiding more anxiety than he already has and, if possible, to getting rid of this anxiety. Many things which seem to be independent entities, processes, or what not, are seen to be, from the standpoint of the theory of anxiety, various techniques for minimizing or avoiding anxiety in living.

Harry Stack Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*¹

The self-system...is an organization of educative experience called into being by the necessity to avoid or to minimize incidents of anxiety.

Harry Stack Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*²

The artists of the twentieth century knew decades ahead of the rest of us that it was the fragmented self that needed to be reassembled, that it was an empty, a nonvital self....And so the artist began to work on that, although, unfortunately in many ways, in such an esoteric fashion that it somehow didn't filter through quickly enough to heal the wounds that existed.

Heinz Kohut, "On the Continuity of the Self and Cultural Selfobjects"³

The eldest son of an art teacher, [Hermann] Rorschach considered becoming an artist but chose medicine instead. As a secondary school student, he was nicknamed Kleck, meaning "inkblot," because of his interest in sketching. ...In 1917 Rorschach discovered the work of Szyman Hens, who had studied the fantasies of his subjects using inkblot cards. In 1918 he began his own experiments with 15 accidental inkblots, showing the blots to patients and asking them, "What might this be?"...The Rorschach test is based on the human tendency to project interpretations and feelings onto ambiguous stimuli, in this case, inkblots.

Entry on Hermann Rorschach in *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*⁴

In 2000, as though to acknowledge the new millennium, José Ciria began a new series of paintings: the first Rorschach Heads, as he came to call them. They were a small group of works, at most a dozen, all appearing in an outburst of spontaneity, as though a sudden discharge from the unconscious. He was in Madrid at the time. In 2005 Ciria moved to New York; the second series of Rorschach Heads soon followed, inspired by a friend's response to Ciria's Post-Suprematist Series, 2006, based on the figures in the late works of Malevich—an unexpected return to the figure by the pioneer of geometrical abstraction. Ciria's friend suggested that he concentrate on the heads of his Post-Suprematist figures. The second series of Rorschach Heads had the same uncanny, quicksilver, abrupt energy as the first series, with the difference that Ciria now seemed to be consciously engaging the key issue of 20th century advanced art: the opposition of abstraction



ECLIPSE DEL AURA and PROFANACIÓN. *Mask of the Glance Series*. 2005.
Oil on tarpaulin. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

and representation which the contradiction between Malevich's early "progressive" abstraction, with its purely formal, "esoteric" logic, and later "regressive" representation, with its "exoteric" figural imagery, made manifest.

With his usual verve and daring, Ciria attempted to reconcile them. But the result—in the Post-Suprematist figures—was uneasy and unnerving, for however boldly equilibrated the formal and the figural (suggesting that the figure was inherently abstract and that the "secret" of pure forms is that they were abstracted from the figure), they never unequivocally integrate. The result is peculiarly surreal or absurd: a sum of parts (generally amorphous, if sometimes biomorphic) that add up to a bizarre, inconclusive whole—an aggregation of abstract fragments in anxious relationship. Indeed, the Post-Suprematist works seem more like anxious deconstructions of the figure rather than sublime reconstructions of it. The figure seems to be disintegrating into abstract fragments, each with a physical presence and forceful fluidity of its own. The figure emerges from the flux of abstract elements, anxiously holding its own for a magical moment, and then sinks back into the abstract flux. The figure is a phantom, however memorable its appearance—by reason of the vividness of its abstract components. Paradoxically, however animated the abstract field, the abstract figure seems inanimate, insensate—insidiously dead, a petrified emblem of the human, a depressed mannequin.

In the second series of Rorschach Heads the dialectic becomes more urgent, strained, insistent, as though to force its resolution: but there is no resolution, only greater anxiety, which now seems embedded in the head, indeed, its essence. If Ciria's Post-Suprematism series can be called "magical abstraction"—abstraction in which a figure magically appears, like a hallucination, a quasi-realistic representation, spontaneously aborting into a flux of sensations, randomly given and eccentrically dynamic—then his Rorschach series can be called "manic abstraction." Abstraction runs riot in the head, overwhelms it, consumes it, becomes its substance, announcing that it has been consumed by anxiety—completely maddened by anxiety. The more totally—purely—abstract the head becomes, the more absolutely—incurably—mad it seems.

"The self-affirmation of a being is the stronger the more non-being it can take into itself," the existential theologian Paul Tillich has written⁵, and "anxiety is *the experience of the threat of imminent non-being*," the existential psychotherapist Rollo May has written⁶. In Ciria's Rorschach Head paintings the threat is so great that the head seems to lose its hold on being, becoming an abstract expression of anxiety—a catastrophe of consciousness, in which every "sensationally" abstract detail becomes emblematic of the insanity in which anxiety ultimately issues, the terrifying sense of not being that overwhelming anxiety conveys, if left uncontrolled. Sometimes geometry becomes the control, giving the abstract fragments shape, containing the anxiety they express, stabilizing them so that can take their place as features of a face, a face that is like a death mask—the face of non-being. Anxiety has triumphed over humanness and the will to be, reducing the human face to a morbid illusion, just as the human body was reduced to one in the Post-Suprematist series: to an abstract display of sensations that defend against the anxiety aroused by death, and death—non-being—itself, even as their eerie radiance, at once fluorescent and incandescent, conveys death's putrescent colors, perversely evoking life.



CARGA RETINIANA II. *Abstract Memory Series*. 2010.
Oil and aluminum on canvas. 51 x 98 inches (130 x 250 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

A similar estheticization of anxiety and death—a similar use of the esthetic defense against the threat of non-being and its manifestation in human being—occurs in Monet and Manet, if with impressionistic rather than the expressionistic means Ciria uses. One might say the supposed triumph of aesthetics—self-evident in pure abstraction—over the reality of life and death is a basic feature of modernist-type art. Monet rendered his dead wife’s face in lively colors, as though insisting she was a sleeping beauty rather than dead—all he had to do was to kiss her with his art to awaken her to eternal life. Manet did the same with his father’s aging body, in effect denying that his father would ever die and cause him anxiety. Both painters used art to avoid anxiety—to deny that life was contaminated by death. Art became an instrument of mummification: art denies the reality of death by adorning it as though it was a form and expression of life, thus turning both life and death into unrealistic art. It is to Ciria’s credit that the operation of the reality principle, and with it the death drive, is evident in his art, not only the pleasure principle, as in the libidinous Impressionism of Monet and Manet. However expressionistically vital Ciria’s reds and yellows (primary colors, with their strong presence), they are countered by an equally expressionistic devitalizing black and gray (melancholy non-colors, conveying profound absence): colorfulness and colorlessness work together to express the annihilative anxiety, not to say terror and horror, so evident in his faces. No aesthetic defense for him, however aesthetically provocative his abstraction. Ciria’s faces have a family resemblance to Munch’s famously terrified faces—many also death’s-heads—in *Anxiety* and *The Scream*, both 1893, and the deadened expressions on the faces in Munch’s *Street Scene in Christiana*, 1895, but they are more unconditionally morbid and perversely abstract. At the same time, there is something defiant in the bold, dynamic way Ciria conveys—fearlessly dramatizes—anxiety, a defiance of death completely absent from Munch’s faces, which seem completely drained by anxiety, as though submitting and finally capitulating to death.

In the third series of Rorschach Heads the question is no longer whether they are abstractions in representational disguise or abstractly camouflaged representations—abstraction and representation uncannily mingled—but rather whether art can remain esthetically pure while representing anxiety. It is no longer only the maddening anxiety human beings consciously experience when they think of their own death or non-being: it is the unconscious anxiety aroused by the threat to art’s existence implicit in the traumatic split of abstraction into gestural and geometrical camps, exemplified by the difference between Kandinsky and Malevich. The birth of abstraction signaled an identity crisis in art—the loss of “complementarity” between abstract form and realistic representation that traditionally existed in art, as Kandinsky said—and the splitting of abstraction into opposing camps at the moment of its birth was a second identity crisis. Elevating abstraction above representation sold art’s possibilities short, and the paring down of abstraction to gestural and geometrical essences that contradicted each other and seemed inherently incommensurate and irreconcilable, and finally the preference for impulsive gesture at the expense of geometrical structure or geometrical structure at the expense of impulsive gesture, left abstraction, and more broadly art, in a dead-end of unresolved conflict.

Ciria brilliantly articulates the conflict in *Danae I* and *II*, both 2005 while attempting to overcome it, but the geometrical square and the explosive gesture remain at odds, suggesting a dialectical standoff rather than resolution of opposites.



HOMBRE DE CORAZÓN ESTRUJADO. *La Guardia Place Series*. 2006. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). FIGURA SOBRE NEGRO. *La Guardia Place Series*. 2007. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). FIGURA ADOLESCENTE. *La Guardia Place Series*. 2007. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)

The title attempts to rescue the abstract work for narrative representation, suggesting the square and the gesture have imagistic import, but it is bit of a stretch to connect the love story of the mortal female Danae and the over-sexed immortal Zeus to the work. Although, no doubt, one can read Ciria's paintings metaphorically. The gestural shower imaginatively corresponds to—symbolizes—the shower of gold which was the form Zeus took when he copulated with Danae. It is clearly a symbol of ejaculate, and suggests that she was a prostitute who made love for money. The “passive” Suprematist square is a symbol of Danae's waiting body, the dynamic gestural shower is a symbol of Zeus's sexual activity and excitement as well as passionate discharge. Many of Ciria's works have sexual import; his intense colors are clearly erotic. *Bodegón de Musas II* and *III*, and *La Danza*, both 2004, with the latter based on Matisse's *Dance*, 1907, but with realistic female bodies—photographs of female nudes—rather than primitivized females, as in Matisse, signals the importance of the erotic for Ciria. He is clearly haunted by woman, as the small image of one—a muse but also a tempting memory—in one of the Rorschach Head paintings suggests. Ciria transposes the erotic to the abstract, more particularly to his flashing reds and yellows, and perhaps above all invests it in his painterly texture, which is powerfully sensual. Even Ciria's thanatopic grays and blacks have an erotic dimension, for they can be read as the ashes of erotic experience.

Is it overstating the matter to say that Ciria's grid, with a grand gesture in each of its square modules, is covertly sexual in import, however overtly a statement of the opposition of geometrical abstraction and gestural abstraction? I am suggesting that Ciria's juxtaposition of grid and gesture is an abstract enactment of an erotic event. The geometrical module contains the gestural ejaculate, functioning the way the female functions in sexual intercourse. The gestural ejaculate becomes the expressive core of the inexpressive module while remaining irreducible to its Procrustean form. The result is dialectically positive—a strangely successful intercourse. At the same time, the module and gesture are formally at odds, making for a negative dialectical aesthetic. They do not merge, but relate through their opposition, establishing a sort of balance of powers, suggesting that they co-imply each other however fundamentally different. Using the same deceptively simple means, Ciria suggests covert commensurateness while conveying overt incommensurateness.

What complicates this paradoxical dialectic—makes it more paradoxical—is the visual fact that the impulsive gesture, however dynamic—indeed, flamboyantly fluid—seems reified and fixed in place, suggesting that it is a sort of paralyzed impulse: an impulse paralyzed by anxiety, implying that however alive with feeling the gesture is, the feeling is peculiarly “strangled,” to use Freud's term, that is, conveys feeling stopped in its expressive tracks. And indeed Ciria's gesture can be read as a sort of truncated trace feeling, ostensibly explosive but incompletely abreacted—peculiarly futile for all its force, meteoric and short-lived for all its intensity and momentum. It has the firepower of a rocket, a sort of visual sound and fury that ends up signaling nothing—its own death.

Let us recall that the word “anxiety” derives from the Latin *angustus* or “narrow,” which in turn derives from *angere*, which means “to pain by pushing together,” “to choke.” The sense of choking back feeling while being compelled to express it



NINE POINTS. 1995. Oil and collage on canvas.
10 x 10 inches (25 x 25 cm)

gives the Rorschach Heads their grotesque appearance. They are dynamically constructed of abstract forms, painfully pushed together in the narrow space of the head to convey the stifling feeling of anxiety. Ciria uses abstraction to convey the feeling that one is being destroyed from within—corroded into abstract non-being, disintegrated in an abstract delirium, and finally defeated by the “death inside,” as the psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott calls it, a haunting abstraction that suggests one is only an abstraction. A person in the grip of anxiety feels unreal and abstract—nightmarishly abstract. Ciria’s Rorschach Head is a battlefield between the feeling of non-being and of being, a space of reality testing in which it is not clear what reality is. The brilliance of Ciria’s Rorschach Heads, especially the third Laguardia series, is that they use highly expressive abstract means to convey the “suffering or sadness” caused by anxiety, to use his words, resulting in the same uncannily inexpressive, muted effect that we see in the Easter Island Heads that Ciria visited, admired, and identified with, as the photograph of him in front of a row of them strongly suggests.

The elevation of abstraction above representation made art introverted and self-absorbed, even as their conflict indicated that art had become self-conflicted, and the conflict within abstraction between the gesturally dynamic and the geometrically structured shows that it had become self-destructive. The autonomy that abstraction supposedly gave art masks the annihilative anxiety, not to say uncertainty about its existence and right to exist, aroused by these profound, seemingly inherent splits in its identity. The anxiety aroused when art separated itself from the lifeworld it traditionally represented was intensified when gestural abstraction and geometrical abstraction went their separate ways. It was a double breakdown of art—a breakdown of its integrity and dialectic. Divided against itself, abstraction seemed less absolute, and opposed to objectivity—external necessity, as Kandinsky called it—art seemed less humanly necessary, however emotionally compelling it remained, at least as long as non-objectivity continued to convey internal necessity and not become a hollow formalism. Ciria’s Rorschach Heads apotheosize this complex anxiety of art—the expression of its death wish, and as such suicidal in import—while showing that it is inseparable from, even an symptomatic expression of a deeper anxiety: the annihilative anxiety innate to being human. It is incurable, but can be successfully defended against by being represented, which is what Ciria does in the Rorschach Heads. The annihilative anxiety of art can be cured by reconnecting it to the lifeworld, however indirectly and metaphorically, as in Ciria’s *Danae* paintings—and directly in his photo-erotic works—and integrating gestural abstraction and geometrical abstraction, whatever the disruptive tension of the dialectical struggle necessary to do so. Ciria convincingly does both in the Rorschach Heads: they are a major modernist achievement and the grand climax of his development. All his previous works—his abstract figures and pure abstractions (his Automatic Deconstructive Abstraction project, 12 years searching for “every possible matter [that] could be found [in] abstraction,” as he writes in a letter to me dated July 6, 2010)—lead up to the Rorschach Heads: they are a project in which his dialectical dexterity, not to say synthesizing flair, comes to fruition.

In Ciria’s Rorschach Heads the self-system, as Sullivan calls it, is in the process of becoming unsystematic and deformed, even as it also seems to be in the process of formation, if never becoming rigidly systematic. Whichever way one looks at it,

it is in perpetual process, and as such can never complete itself, which is why it will always look bizarrely fragmented: always seem to represent what Kohut calls the fragmented self. But Ciria's self is not "empty" and "nonvital," as Kohut says, for the fragments have their own colorful life, conveying an uncanny fullness. But one cannot deny that the head has become an expressionistic "scream," as Oskar Kokoschka called the self imploding because of its anxiety. Ciria's self-portraits—for that is what the Rorschach Heads implicitly are, however often based on "portraits" of anonymous persons taken from photographs—are a sort of radical *reductio ad absurdum* of Kokoschka's more realistic portraits of prominent people infected by anxiety, with the faces of some of them, including Kokoschka's in some of his self-portraits, almost chaotically disorganized, suggesting the collapse of their self-system. The modernist portrait, which can be said to have begun with Munch's and Kokoschka's portraits of emotionally disturbed people—people destabilized by anxiety, people who seem at a loss however ostensibly self-possessed, people whose mental instability is conveyed by their distorted, peculiarly abstract appearance, confirming their inner absurdity—and to have reached a crescendo of sorts in Bacon's portraits, especially self-portraits, is carried to an abstract expressionistic extreme in Ciria's self-portraits. It is their paradoxicality that makes them extreme: the abstract fragments can be re-assembled in an infinite number of ways, suggesting that there is no right self, and that the self remains an expressive puzzle to itself. It can constantly be reconfigured, suggesting its protean character. For Ciria, there is clearly no one, ideal model for the self. At the same time, the abstract fragments come and hold together in a grotesque whole, a consistently grotesque—monstrous—whole that suggests a consistent sense of self, and suggests that the self realizes its own monstrousness—the monstrousness of its protean character, which is an expression of its innate creativity.

I suggest that Ciria's self-portraits are a compromise formation (like a dream) between his primary creativity, which is invariably unconventional and thus socially outrageous, and his use of abstraction to express it—abstraction that has become conventional. I am using Winnicott's famous distinction between the true creative self, with its "personalized ideas and spontaneous gestures," which seem socially rebellious, unconventional, even absurd and insane; and the false compliant self, the self that has betrayed its creativity by routinely following conventions, that is, ideas and methods that were once bizarrely revolutionary but have become historicized, sanitized clichés. One might say that Ciria is trapped between what Max Weber called the "iron cage" of the System, which is represented by the grid, and his own passionate creativity, represented by his personal gesture—his "signature" painterliness, as Harold Rosenberg called it. The question for Ciria is how to personalize the conventions of abstraction—re-personalize what has become impersonal and imprisoning, renew what has become old, tired, and standardized since the days of Kandinsky and Malevich, when it was young and revolutionary: how to make abstraction spontaneous, fresh, and outrageous once again, so that it is no longer just another decadent way of making banal art. As I have suggested, Ciria's convincing answer is by dramatizing the tragic split between the gestural and geometrical in abstraction, and, more broadly, the tragic split of art into representation and abstraction, a split within a split that devastates art. Ciria's art recapitulates these splits, not as steps in art's purification of itself, as art historians have said they are, but as signs of its tragic situation in modernity. His recapitulation of the splits is optimistic to the extent it overcomes the splits, pessimistic to the extent it suggests their inevitability. It is a creative triumph because it is simultaneously optimistic and pessimistic.

No doubt the initial modern differentiation of art into abstraction and representation was driven by inner necessity, and inaugurated a new creative era of art. But the differentiation of abstraction into gestural and geometrical components which occurred soon after the initial differentiation was the ironical beginning of the end of modern art. By definition gestural and geometrical abstraction are self-limiting, and necessarily go their separate ways to maintain their purity and autonomy. The inevitable result is a one-dimensional entropic art: the chaotic gesturalism of Pollock's all-over paintings, the simplistic structures of Minimalist geometry. A creative limit was quickly reached, implying that what seemed to be evolution through differentiation was in fact devolution through splitting. Splitting turned out not to be dialectical differentiation, but a manifestation of art's annihilative and paranoid anxiety. In Ciria's abstraction splitting becomes dialectical, that is, leads towards the synthesis of opposites while respecting their difference. The split is no longer absolute and regressive.

Adorno has said that abstract art reflects the fact that the relationship between human beings is abstract in modern society, suggesting that the derangement of the abstract fragments in Ciria's tragic self-portraits bespeaks society's deranged abstractness. Can one say that Ciria's Suprematist square represents the unavoidable tendency to comply and conform—necessary to survive socially—and his convulsive gesture represents creative independence and nonconformity, however aggressively charged with sexual desire, and as such powerfully instinctive? Ciria's Rorschach Head is deranged because it is self-contradictory: it is charged with the anxiety of self-contradiction. But it also shows that anxiety brings its own creative solution with it, for the head remains self-contained despite its self-contradictory contents.

The point I am making is that Ciria's Rorschach Heads are projections of his self and tests of his creativity—of his ability to solve the basic creative problems of modern art. In his letter to me he wrote that he “took the title of Rorschach Heads from the Rorschach psychological tests. The idea was that the people in front of my paintings could try to find out what they meant to them”. He has in fact incorporated people—strangers—in his Rorschach Heads, as his use of their anonymous images indicates, but the question is what the Rorschach Heads mean to him. The Rorschach test is “a projective test consisting of ten symmetric ink blots varying in shape and colour. [Five are in black and white only, five introduce colour] The respondent examines each one in turn and interprets it by saying what it looks like. The test is designed to yield information about unconscious mental processes”. Ciria has created his own Rorschach test—idiosyncratically asymmetrical and all delirious with color, however many of the colorful “blots” have sober black, white, and gray areas, indicating his creative independence and individuality rather than his compliance with the formal conventions of standard Rorschach blots—and projected himself into it in art historical as well as anonymous disguise. One quickly sees through the disguise, for his Rorschach Heads have an artistic complexity and personal intensity that the impersonal Rorschach ink blot lacks. And Ciria's Rorschach Heads are much varied and numerous than the Rorschach ink blots.

Ciria notes that his Rorschach Heads have a certain affinity with Leonardo da Vinci's grotesque heads. Leonardo was the “most famous forerunner” of Rorschach, as Coleman says, and “Leonardo's paranoiac ancient wall,” as Breton called it⁸, was the first projective test—the first art in which an artist tested his imagination and creativity, and experimentally projected the contents of his psyche onto and into an amorphous gestural surface. Ciria's Rorschach Heads are an ingenious elaboration of Leonardo's wall, for they bring the mental contents projected back into the head which projected them—the physical space of the head becomes a psychic space. Also, crucially, Ciria shows that these contents are abstract and unconscious, rather than representational and conscious, which indicates that he has a deeper, more modern understanding of them than Leonardo had.

¹ Harry Stack Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry* (New York: Norton, 1953), 11.

² Ibid., 165.

³ Heinz Kohut, “On the Continuity of the Self and Cultural Selfobjects,” *Self Psychology and the Humanities* (New York: Norton, 1985), 239.

⁴ *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), volume 10, 178.

⁵ Quoted in Rollo May, “Contributions of Existential Psychotherapy,” *Existence*, eds. Rollo May, Ernest Angel, and Henri F. Ellenberger (Northvale, NJ and London: Jason Aronson, 1994), 51.

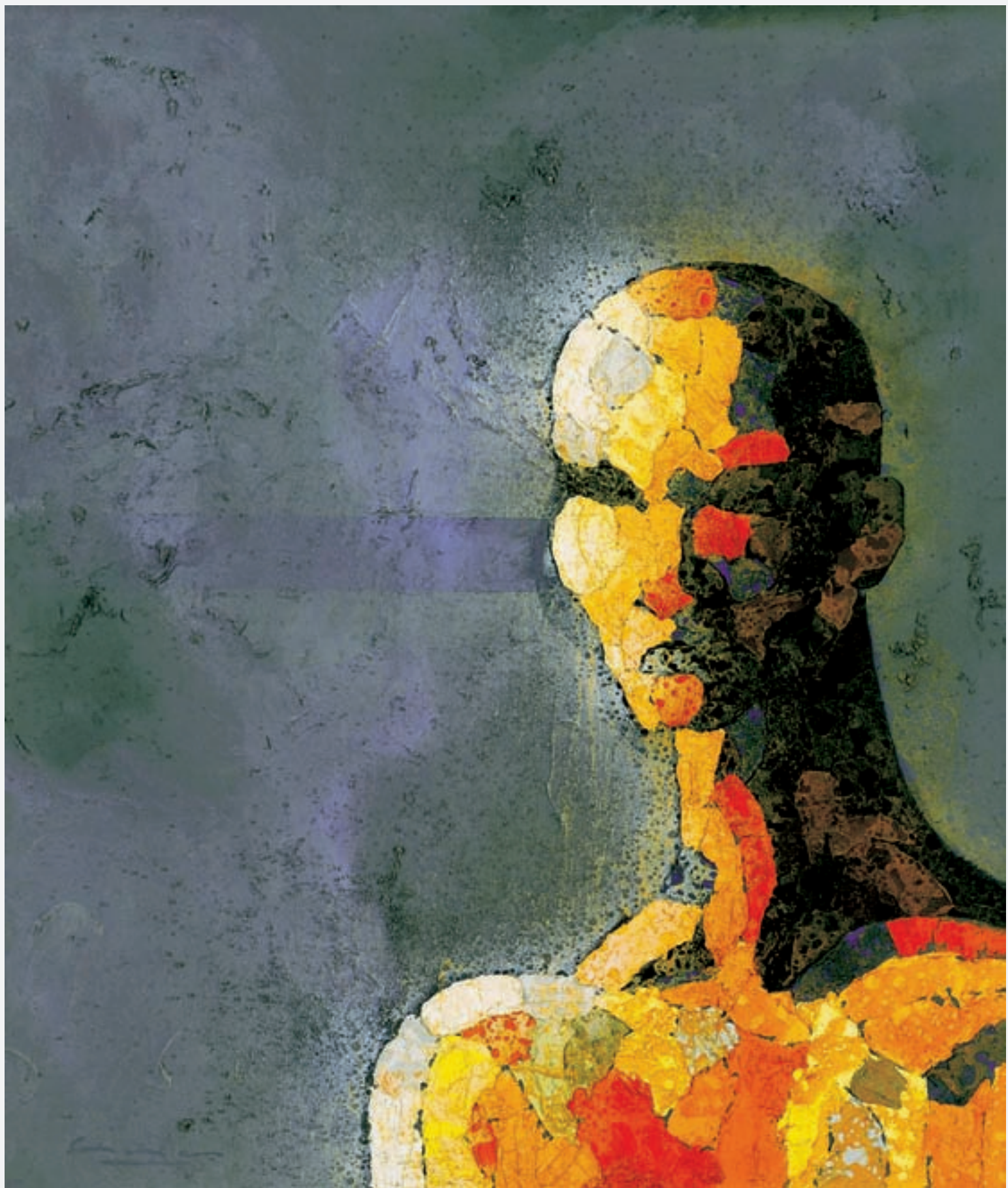
⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Andrew M. Coleman, *A Dictionary of Psychology* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 645.

⁸ André Breton, “Artistic Genesis and Perspective of Surrealism,” *Surrealism and Painting* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 74, describes “the lesson taught by...Leonardo da Vinci that one should allow one's attention to absorbed in the contemplation of streaks of dried spittle or the surface of an old wall until the eye is able to distinguish an *alternative* world.” For Leonardo, the alternative world was not too different from the everyday exterior world; it contained familiar figures and landscapes, however sometimes distorted. For the abstract automatist/expressionist Ciria, it is radically different, for it is an interior world, and as such permanently distorted.

MAN 400

1985. Oil on wood. 39,5 x 32 inches (100 x 81 cm). Collection of the artist





FACE I

1989. Oil on canvas. 12 x 8 inches (30 x 20 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

FACE II

1989. Oil on canvas. 12 x 8 inches (30 x 20 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

HEAD

1991. Oil on canvas. 39,5 x 32 inches (100 x 81 cm). Private Collection, Madrid





HEAD

1992. Oil and collage on canvas. 16 x 12 inches (40 x 30 cm). Collection Yago Ciria, Madrid

SEPARATE THE HEADS FROM THEIR BODIES

Masks of the Glance Series. 1994. Oil and charcoal on tarpaulin. 86 x 63 inches (220 x 160 cm). Private Collection, Madrid







ROMAN HEAD

1996. Oil and charcoal on paper. 39 x 27 inches (100 x 70 cm). Private Collection, Barcelona

RORSCHACH HEAD

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2000. Oil and charcoal on paper. 20 x 14 inches (50 x 35 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

RORSCHACH HEAD II

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2000. Oil and charcoal on paper. 20 x 14 inches (50 x 35 cm). Private Collection, Madrid



CHECKERED RORSCHACH HEAD

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on tarpauline.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

HEAD FULL OF EYES

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on tarpauline.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, Madrid



VICTIMS III (MAGEN DAVID)
Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 86 x 86 inches (220 x 220 cm). Collection of the artist



VICTIMS VI (DOUBLE LANDSCAPE OF THE WATCHWER), VICTIMS V (MENORÁ), VICTIMS IV (DEJECTION) and VICTIMS II (FIGURE AND DESOLATE GROUND)
Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 86 x 86 inches (220 x 220 cm). Collection of the artist, except Victims II Givatayim Museum-Theater, Tel Aviv



VICTIMS I (EPHEMERAL EXISTENCE)
Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 86 x 86 inches (220 x 220 cm). Collection of the artist





HEAD

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on paper. 53 x 39 inches (135 x 100 cm). Private Collection, Tel Aviv

HEAD ON A YELLOW BACKGROUND I, II, III, IV and V

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2001. Oil and charcoal on paper. 53 x 39 inches (135 x 100 cm).

Private collection, Alicante. Private collection, Madrid. Private collection, Alicante. Private Collection, Madrid





HEAD ON BLACK

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2004. Oil on canvas.
39 x 32 inches (100 x 81 cm). Private Collection, Lisbon

HEAD ON RED

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2004. Oil on canvas.
39 x 32 inches (100 x 81 cm). Private Collection, Lisbon



MEETING (MASKS)

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2004. Oil on canvas.
39 x 32 inches (100 x 81 cm). Private Collection, Lisbon

THREE MASKS

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2004. Oil on canvas.
39 x 32 inches (100 x 81 cm). Private Collection, Lisbon



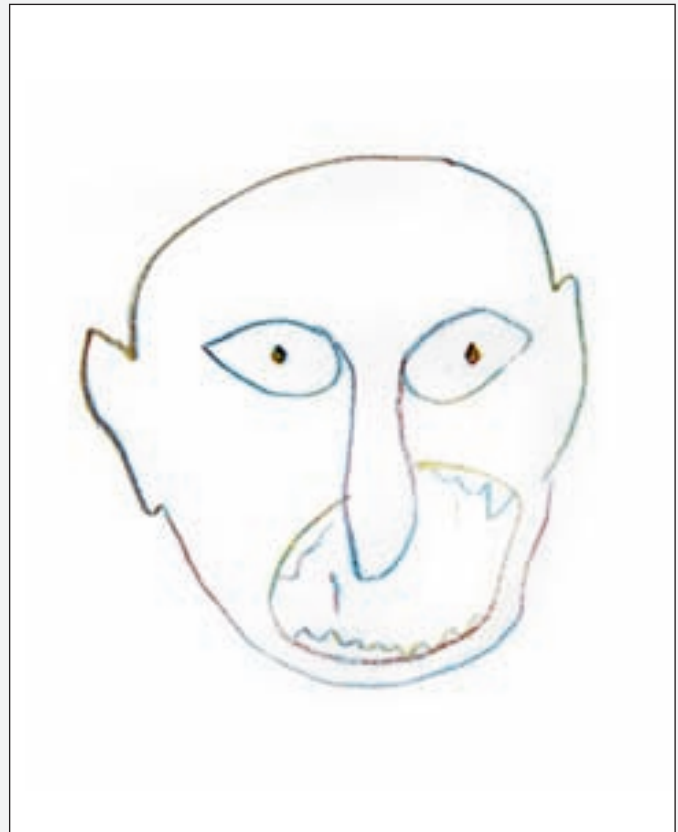
HEAD OF MEMORIES

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2004. Oil on canvas. 67 x 67 inches (170 x 170 cm). Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto



ERASING HEAD

Rorschach Heads I Series. 2005. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 67 x 67 inches (170 x 170 cm). Private Collection, Madrid







REMEMBERING THE JEWISH HEADS
2005. Graphite on paper. 14 x 11 inches (35,6 x 27,9 cm). Private Collection, Miami



HE IS A MEATHEAD BUT HE TRIES
2005. Graphite on paper. 14 x 11 inches (35,6 x 27,9 cm)



MALEVICH HEAD ON ORANGE

2006. Gouache and crayon on paper. 14 x 11 inches (35,6 x 27,9 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

MALEVICH HEAD ON YELLOW

2006. Gouache and crayon on paper. 14 x 11 inches (35,6 x 27,9 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

MALEVICH HEAD I, II, IV and III

2005. Oil on Foam-board. 30 x 20 inches (76 x 51 cm). Private Collection, New York





MALEVICH'S RED AND YELLOW HEAD

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2005. Oil on canvas. 20 x 27 inches (50 x 70 cm). Private Collection, New Port Beach, CA



HARLEQUIN HEAD

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2005. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Madrid



RED AND GREY HEAD, TORMENTED HEAD, HEAD OVER MALEVICH FIELD and VIRTUAL TRAVELER HEAD

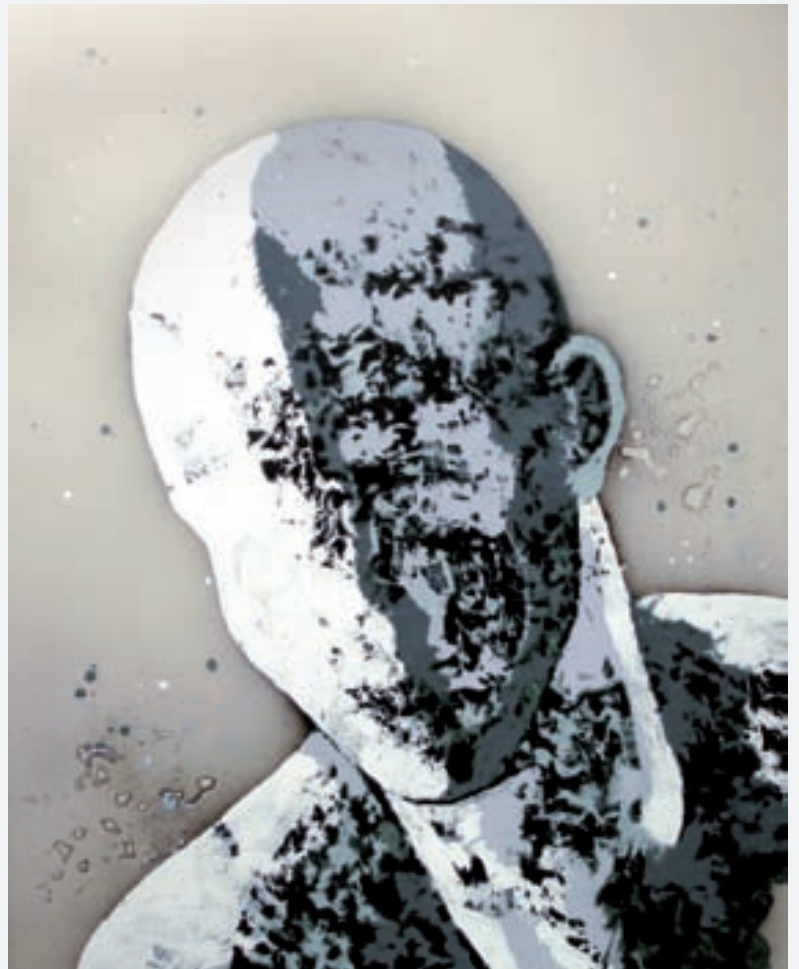
Rorschach Heads II Series. 2005. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm)

Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto. Private Collection, Phoenix, AZ. Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto. Private Collection, Madrid



DOUBLE-CROSS MALEVICH HEAD

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2005. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto



GRAY HEAD

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2005. Oil on canvas. 60 x 48 inches (152,5 x 122 cm)
Private Collection, Madrid

GRAY HEAD II

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2006. Oil on canvas. 60 x 48 inches (152,5 x 122 cm)
Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto



SELF-PORTRAIT AS A SUPREMATIST FIGURE

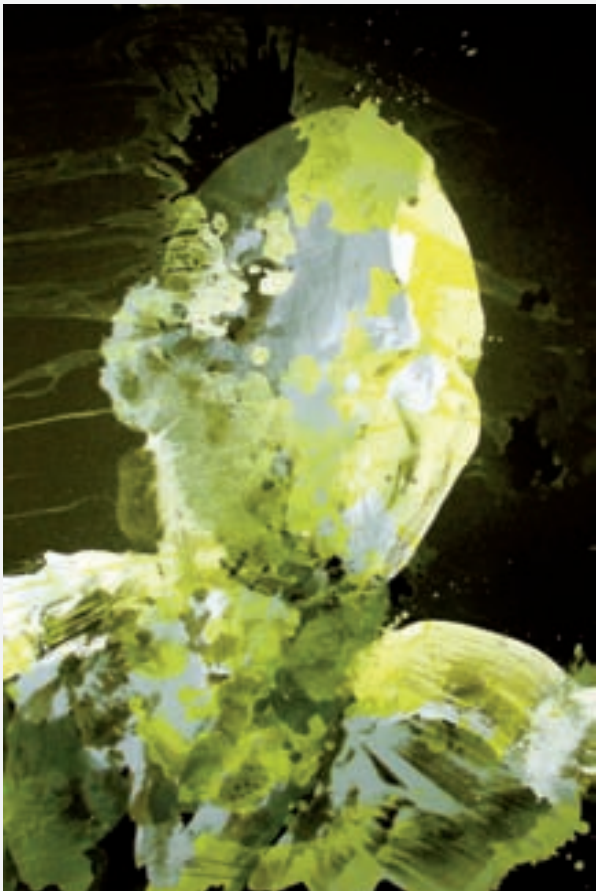
Rorschach Heads II Series. 2006. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Collection Angel Fiochi, Santander. Courtesy Juan Silió Gallery, Santander

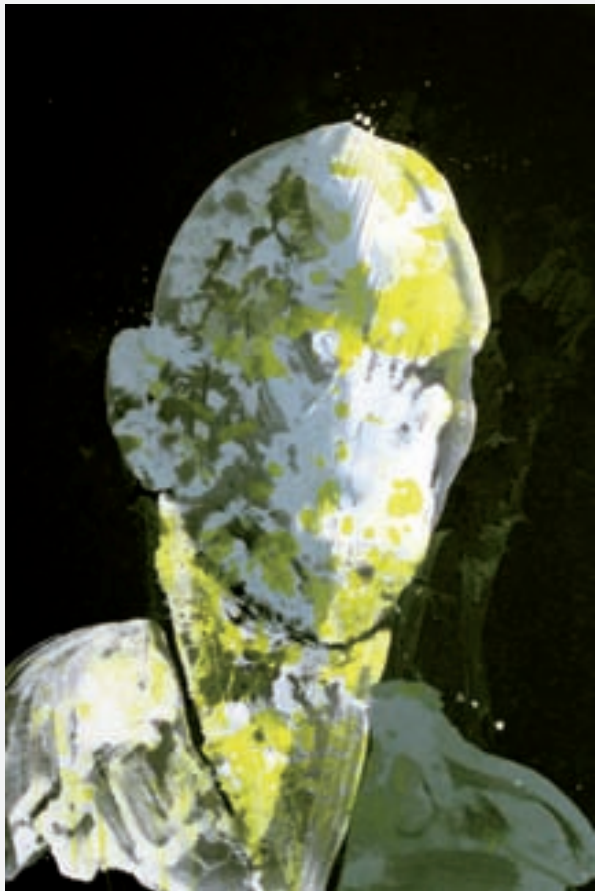


FEELING AND BLACK SQUARE

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2005. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto







HEAD I, II, III, IV, V and VI
Rorschach Heads II Series. 2006. Oil on Foam-board. 30 x 20 inches (76 x 51 cm)



FRONTAL GRAY HEAD

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2006. Oil on canvas.
59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm).

Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto

GREEN HEAD

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2006. Oil on canvas.
59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm).

Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto



HEAD WITH SUPREMATIST ELEMENTS

Rorschach Heads II Series. 2006. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Porto. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto



ORANGE HEAD

Structures Series. 2006. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, New York



STRUCTURE II

Structures Series, 2006. Oil on canvas. 39 x 39 inches (100 x 100 cm). Private Collection, Toronto. Courtesy Christopher Cutts Gallery, Toronto



WHITE HEAD OVER BLACK BACKGROUND
Structures Series. 2006. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, Madrid



RED HEAD AND VERTICAL ELEMENTS

Structures Series. 2006. Oil and charcoal on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, Palma de Mallorca



HEAD ON RED EARTH

La Guardia Place Series, 2007. Oil on paper, 39 x 27 inches (100 x 70 cm). Collection of the artist

MASK HEAD

La Guardia Place Series, 2007. Oil on paper, 39 x 27 inches (100 x 70 cm). Collection of the artist



PATCHES-HEAD

La Guardia Place Series, 2007. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Collection of the artist



PHOSPHENE HEAD

La Guardia Place Series. 2007. Epoxi acrylic on thermic insulating. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Collection Ars Fundum, Madrid



HEAD ON RED BACKGROUND

Rorschachs Heads II Series, 2007. Oil on canvas. 46 x 35 inches (116 x 89 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

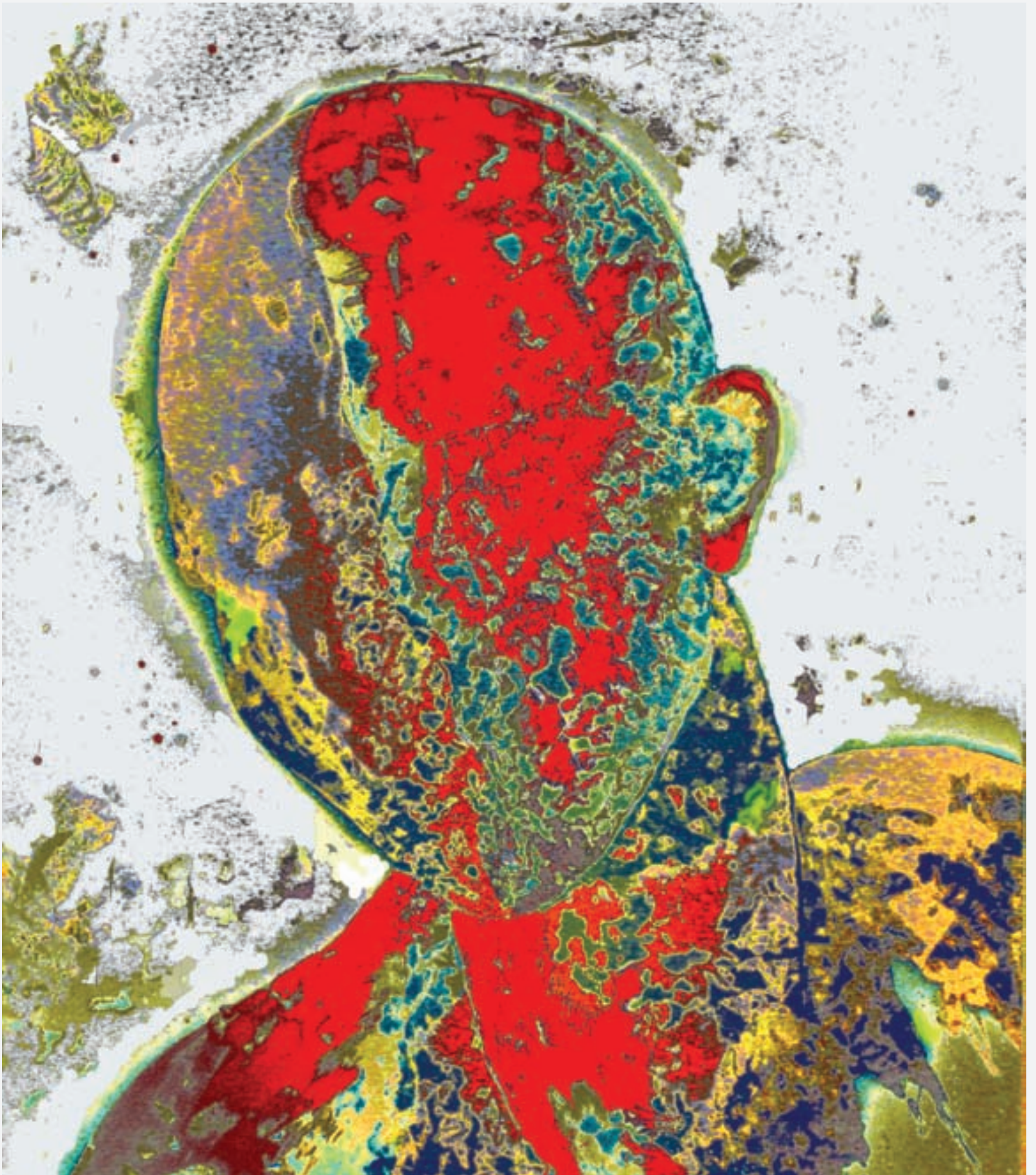


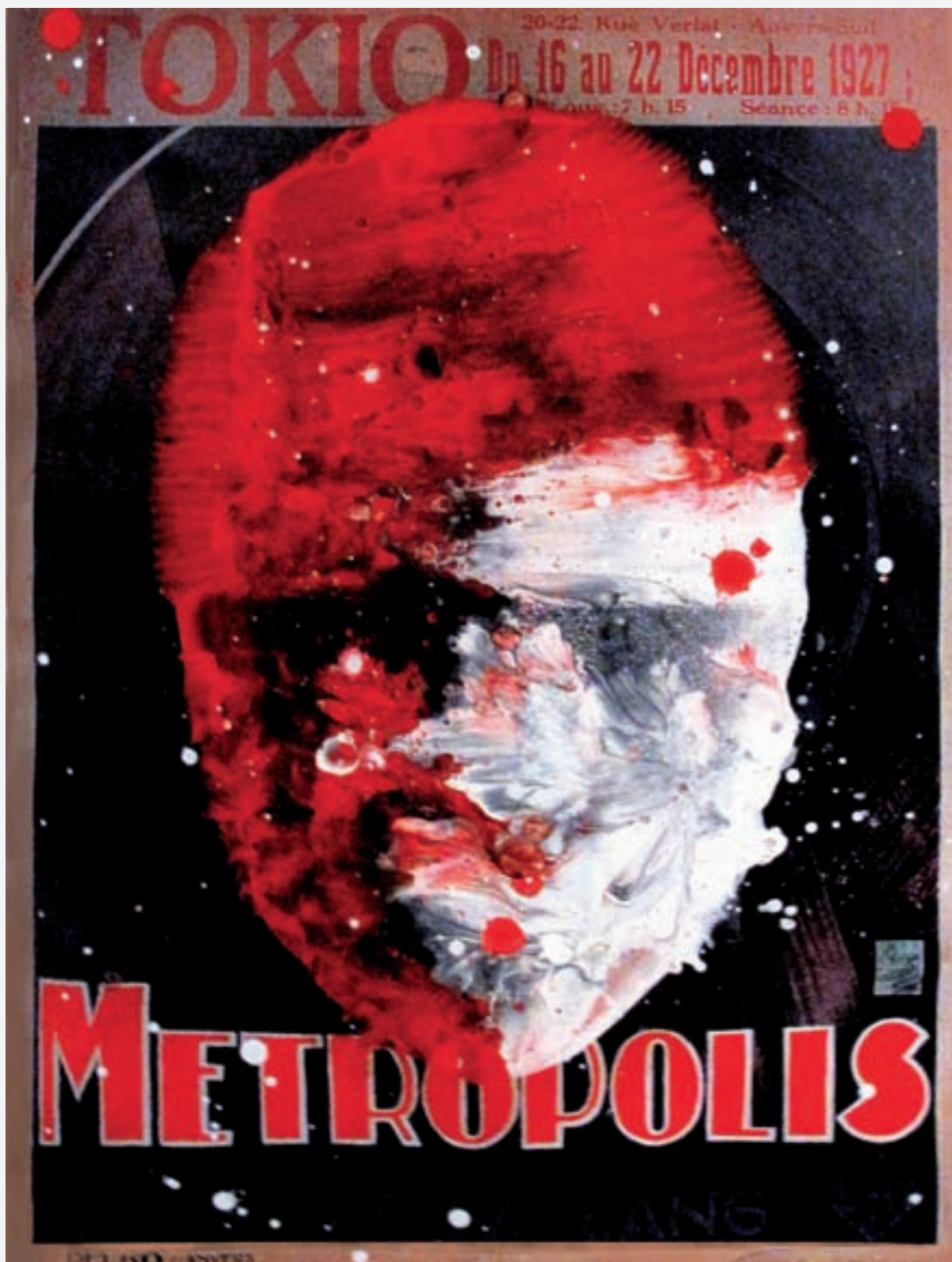
STUDY OF THE HEAD

2005. Digital stamp on paper. 39 x 27 inches (100 x 70 cm). Not edited

STAMPED HEAD

2005. Digital stamp on paper. 47 x 39 inches (120 x 100 cm). Not edited





METROPOLIS

Masks of the Glance Series. 2006. Oil on paper poster. 17 x 11 inches (43 x 28 cm). Collection of the artist



O'HUNDRED

Masks of the Glance Series. 2005. Oil on paper poster. 17 x 11 inches (43 x 28 cm). Collection of the artist





GAMES MASK

Schandenmaske Masks Series. 2008. Oil on canvas.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Collection Ars Fundum, Madrid

MASK OF THE LOST ONES

Schandenmaske Masks Series. 2008. Oil on canvas.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Collection of the artist

MIRACLES MASK

Schandenmaske Masks Series. 2008. Epoxi acrylic on thermic insulating.
79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Collection of the artist



HEAD ON A GREEN BACKGROUND
Schandenmaske Masks Series. 2008. Oil on canvas. 20 x 18 inches (51 x 40,5 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

THE EYE THAT WEEPS AT THE PAINTING
Doodles Series. 2008. Oil on tarpaulin. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, New Port Beach, CA





Rorschach Heads

Carlos Delgado

The exhibition “CIRIA. RORSCHACH HEADS” brings together a selection of paintings from the artist José Manuel Ciria over the last two years. This period of time coincides with the creation of his Rorschach Heads III series which is part of his North American cycle, beginning in 2005 when he moved from Madrid to New York.

The “Automatic Deconstructive Abstraction (ADA)” theoretical model created by the artist in the 90s, which is highly formalized and organized into five conceptual fields, has been the prevailing interpretive framework used by critics for addressing Ciria’s abstract work. The quantitative enrichment of the pictorial variables unfolding in Ciria’s production since late 2005 converges with the ADA concept in several significant ways. On one hand, is the importance of varying degrees of figuration in the image, which is directly tied to the structural position of drawing. Secondly, the possibilities of color are multiplied at the same time as its function as a representative register is questioned.

It should be pointed out that this iconic and chromatic invasion has a counterpoised binary logic. The hieratic bodies of the Post-Suprematist (Post-Supremática) series (2005-2006) led to the free, evasive, mutant and formally differentiated forms of the La Guardia Place series (2006-2008). In contrast to achieving meaning like an open rift, the work that came afterwards tended towards the linear condensation of the recurring purified and straightforward oval design in the Schandenmaske series (2008). Perhaps as a purely semantic response to the mask-module, in these later pieces the artist broadened his chromatic range, accelerated his flowing rhythm over the support and sought to heighten color through dissonant contrasts. Fractured iconography and intense chromophilia, two codes that were incompatible in previous projects, only reconcile themselves in the painter’s following series where the experimental modular root gives way to an iconographic freedom that does not fit any authoritarian order. I am referring to the Doodles (2009) series in which Ciria invents a new kind of figure similar to the idea of children’s stickmen, which he had already partially developed in the Appelian Diversions (*Divertimentos Appelianos*) of 2006, and that are an energetic mix of the Cobra temperature with the naiveté of Miró materialized into stridently colored petrified feeling rag dolls with frizzy hair and distended features.

Over the last two years, Ciria has pursued two different conceptual and formal projects in parallel. On one hand, there are the paintings that make up the Abstract Memory (Memoria Abstracta) series that illustrate the new levels the artist achieves in his examination of the potential links between gesture and structure. In contrast to the broken staining of Masks of the Glance (*Máscaras de la Mirada*), where the resistance between water and acid eroded the morphology, Ciria is now using flat stains of color that engage in a violent dialogue with the black. The syntax this produces possesses a frenzied internal energy that seems to be struggling to free itself from the strict geometric compartmentalization that structures its rhythm over the surface.

In parallel to this wholly abstract series, the artist explores a highly unique figurative concept through the series that is the focus of the present exhibition: Rorschach Heads III. In his most recent series, Ciria has opted for painting that is wholly figurative apparently free from any abstraction that would hinder a referential reading, yet which is by no means naturalistic. The most recent series consists of larger-than-life faces that become battlefields with counterpoints of light and chromatic distortions; highly charged close-ups that draw the viewer into a raw dialogue with the viewer. They are, nevertheless, still



REGRESO A LA MIRADA I and II. *Masks of the Glance Series*. 2005. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Private Collection, Madrid

portraits with no conceptual divisions or formal exploration other than what comes out of the desire to make painting a compelling visual event. This bold aesthetic strategy -distanced from the aloofness of some of his riskier more conceptual work- allows us to connect with the one who looks in a direct way through the use of our senses.

In New York, Ciria coalesced into an artist who makes constantly changing direction the pattern that spurs his evolution, which becomes a rejuvenating anxiety that is heightened by the interruption of each (now only temporary) return to his studio in Madrid. An intermittence foreshadowing the disappearance of a unique discourse whose result is that the stories diversify and tentatively order themselves. How then can one go about the task of clarifying a career that is so evocative, yet so full of ambiguity? The present exhibition suggests a response with two complementary methodological tools. On one hand, the mask is taken as a principle of discursive subjection and unification. And on the other hand, the artist's (physical and mental) nomadic nature is taken as a generating principle for development.

The Artist as Nomad

Ciria's mature abstract work has accounted for some of the most outstanding moments in Spanish painting in recent decades. In New York, his paintings play a key role in the significant shift towards a new position based on his interest in drawing and away from relying on mainly gestural expressionism. He has not, however, abandoned his theoretical investigations into the understanding of form as a language and the central role of time and memory as the thematic understructure of his production. The most recent developments in his work, sustained by an invariable inventive continuity and capable of surprisingly coherent moves in radically divergent directions have certainly been quite complex. It is this constant movement that leads us to characterize Ciria as a "nomadic" artist, in both the physical and mental sense.

In a physical sense because Ciria is an enthusiastic traveler and a great assimilator and integrator of contrasts and cultures. In consonance with the unstoppable process of contemporary globalization, Ciria has perceived with incontrovertible lucidity that apprehended territories are not foreign places, but rather the spaces of his own privacy, the realm of his freedom and creativity. Ciria has worked systematically on his paintings as if they were a unique cartography expressing the creative incidences of the time he has spent in different places around the world (Paris, Rome, Tel Aviv, Moscow, and now New York).

Ciria, however, is just as we suggested, also an artist who is a nomad within his own poetics. The materials he uses, in addition to the ones marked by the passage of time (the re-used supports), oscillate between ones traditionally used in the visual arts (paint, paper, canvas...) and experimental derivations that have consistently turned out to be quite serendipitous discoveries (e.g. plastic tarpaulin, polyvinyl, insulation panels). It is one way of expanding the geography of pictorial Art



THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKIN (VERSION II), BROTHERS (VERSION II), FLYING PANTS (VERSION II), *La Guardia Place Series*, 2008. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm)

that sustains his break from rigid formal stability and is exemplified by the ongoing succession of series or families that make up his New York cycle.

The (formal) geography of the head

Monumental yet intimate, the series Rorschach Heads III is a significant point of inflection in Ciria's career. In the context of the referential iconography from Ciria's New York period, the figure had been used as a stimulus for free interpretation that, even in the most figurative work, was oriented towards defining the essential features of the shape of an icon that had undergone various degrees of *metamorphosis*. After morphological appearance had disintegrated, and, along with it, the notion of the specific subject and its *being in the world* –in the words of Merleau-Ponty–, the figure lost the anchor of its identity. In paintings like *Strange Woman* (Mujer extraña), *Bather*, *New Bather with Round Forms*, *Contortionist I* (Bañista, Nueva bañista de formas redondeadas, Contorsionista I) or, *Contortionist II* (Contorsionista II), which are all part of the La Guardia Place Series, the artist emphasized the metamorphosis that produced the almost total loss of recognizability and the superimposition of the versatile forms on top of the static ones alongside a complex tension in the ambiguity of meaning. Clearly, Ciria's explorations into the genre of figure/portrait painting were resolved through what Rosa Martínez-Artero has called –between interrogative signs– *new constructions of the subject*: “a feeling deeply rooted in contingency and fragility (the not-defined), in opposition to the security given by naming (the hierarchizing structure of the “one”), that produces a *subject* - “I”, which is difficult to describe pictorially”¹. This difficulty emerged in the pseudo-figures of La Guardia Place because they were bodies interpenetrated by multiplicity, by dismemberment.

In Rorschach Heads III, the difficulty does not lie in seeing the portrait. The wide margins of iconicity between which figuration in contemporary painting is defined make it possible to continue talking about this genre even when the concept of *likeness* has been debunked. Line, volume and light, or handling color using a scale of tones and varying saturation, are not applied in order to imitate a specific subject, but rather to say something new about the artist's identity as a painter. The subject of the portrait, when it is real, does not own their own image and they can scarcely find a cartography for orienting themselves along the path of their identity. The subject, however, is also a mask whose identity has been projected beyond its own morphology to integrate a new self, mediated by painting. In a sense, representing someone else's body implicitly articulates the artist's attitude towards his own body, and ultimately all his work becomes, in one way or another, a self portrait.

The (emotional) Geography of the head

In a personal conversation, Ciria acknowledged two recent events from his personal life that could have sparked his new series. First, his father's fatal brain tumor and, secondly, his trip to Easter Island and encountering the Moai and the

primitiveness of the Rapa Nui culture. Symbolically these two events present the idea of the face/head as the synecdoche of a totality (the head as an emblem for a suffering human self, and the head as an icon of a lost civilization, respectively). But, culture, creation and Art, on the contrary, are what make it possible for some part of a person to become immortal, to leave their mark on history. A person lives and dies and is merely a speck of dust in the totality of what it is to be human. Culture, creation and Art, on the contrary, are what make it possible for some part of a person to become immortal, to leave their mark on history. The former is objectified, a face linked to a name, while the latter is a social face, a symbol, that is not or does not mean to be anyone's head.

Over the last two years, Ciria has made a number of tributes to his father using the symbol of the mask pierced by a gestural stain. In those tributes, the head is an active *site* that presents the imbalance produced by forging identity and its association with the idea of death. As José Miguel G. Cortés has said, "a society based in the hegemony of rationalization and the confrontation between the contradictions found in human beings is a society that leads us to the conclusion that *we have a body*, without ever understanding that *we are a body*." By accepting the second affirmation we can situate the body in a place where it will no longer be a border to get beyond but part of the symbolic whole where life and death are not conceived of as antagonistic elements, but as complementary parts of a totality that shapes our existence.

Conversely, Ciria has worked systematically on his paintings as if they were a unique cartography expressing the creative incidences of the time he has spent in different places around the world (Paris, Rome, Monfragüe, Tel Aviv, Moscow and New York). His "nomadic" nature has always been tied to his commitment to locating, and it should not be surprising that his trip to Easter Island has led to a significant exploration in his painting.

There is a theory that the Moai were carved by the Polynesians to represent deceased ancestors. For Ciria, however, that idea is overshadowed by his interest in the monumental conception, imposing frontality and synthetic expressiveness of those sculptures. Ciria is connecting in this way with the recurring interest throughout modernity in so-called *primitive* culture, which is considered to be the culture produced by ancient peoples that predated the ones who marked the beginning of Western civilization. It cannot be denied that in Ciria's interest in the Moai there is a desire for escape, to get away from the complex *visual density* of the current culture for the masses by seeking refuge in a symbol of the primitive. Nevertheless, what for the artistic pioneers of the 20th century was a pure discovery that helped liberate them from the traditional canon, represents for Ciria just one more reference to digest, analyze, translate and incorporate into his work.

Being a face, a represented image, before anything else, means no longer being other things. The ambiguity Ciria presents between going back to the figure and its persistent anti-naturalistic transformation, which he carries out within the framework of the formal problems of representation, indicates a proclivity to constantly transgress or even negate the physical and psychological affirmations of the genre. Like stage makeup, structured in bursts, the colors usurp the verisimilitude of the skin of the figures that make up Rorschach Heads III. It may be precisely the eye-catching tonal distortion, the absence of any specific setting and the static frontal position of the figures that constitute the only ways to ensure the permanence of the "I" in times of ephemeral occurrences and frantically-paced transformations.

Ultimately, Rorschach Heads III, must be seen as a series supported by extremes. Firstly, there are the chromatic combinations, whose violent combinations are risky and dissonant. Secondly, there are formal extremes that drive him to impetuously vary the descriptiveness of some faces, (for example, *Crossed-Out Liar* or *Grunda*), alongside paintings where the caricatured deformation shifts the picture into the terrain of the grotesque (like his imposing *Self-Portrait*). In particular, however, Rorschach Heads III is a series that thrusts us from the Now into its extreme temporal opposite: the beginning. The human figure was one of the essential elements of Ciria's early work and in paintings like *Tormented* (Atormentado) from 1987, *Waiting* (La espera) (1988), *Swimmer* (Nadador) from 1989, or *Face* (Rostro) from 1989, the structure of the

composition is already derived solely from the face, color has lost its figurative quality, the physical deformations are an index of expressiveness and any measurable spatial reference has disappeared. Perhaps unconsciously, Ciria has constructed a part of his New York work through cyclically revisiting his previous series, which we already saw in Post-Suprematist and Automaton (Autómatas), La Guardia Place and Men, Hands, Organic Forms and Signs (Hombres, Manos, Formas Orgánicas y Signos) or with Masks of the Gaze (Mascaras de la Mirada) and Abstract Memory. With Rorschach Heads III, a circular cycle whose only outlet is a seepage that breaks through its edges, things seem to have come to a close. And, because of Ciria's seriousness about constantly rethinking his painting and its elements, we can be sure that his work in the near future will be as distinctive and intriguing as that which preceded it.

¹ Martínez-Artero, Rosa. *El retrato. Del sujeto en el retrato*. Montesinos, Barcelona, 2004, p.261.







TWO-FACE

Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm)



THE HERO

Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



ACID RAIN
Work in progress
ACID RAIN

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York





SUNLIGHT THROUGH THE LEAVES

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas.
98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm)

I CAN'T ANSWER

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm)



DISTURBING NOISES
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
 98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm)

STUPID VOTER
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
 98 x 98 inches (250 x 250 cm)

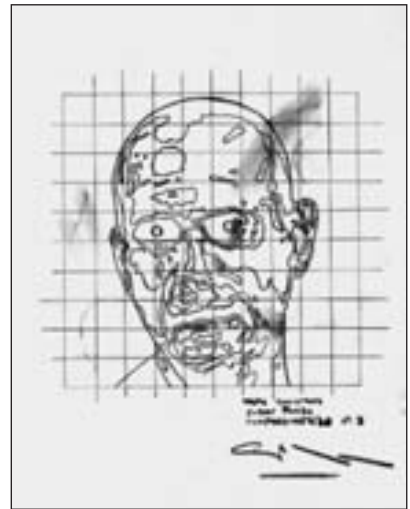




BOTHERING DOUBLE GLANCE *Rorschach Heads III Series*, 2010. Oil on canvas, 79 x 150 inches (200 x 380 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York









SELF-PORTRAIT ON THE MIRROR I, II and III

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 60 x 48 inches (152,5 x 122 cm). Collection of the artist







FUNNY FACE

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.

59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York

PORTRAIT

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas.

59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm).

Private Collection, Valencia. Courtesy Cordeiros Gallery, Porto



TRAGAJOS

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Madrid. Courtesy Arteinversión Space, Madrid



SURPRISED

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas.
57 1/2 x 45 inches (146 x 114 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York

YOUNG ASSISTANT

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
57 1/2 x 45 inches (146 x 114 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



TALKATIVE PARANOIAC
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas.
 57½ x 45 inches (146 x 114 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York

AFRICAN WITH CAT EYES
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
 57½ x 45 inches (146 x 114 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



STUDY OF A FACE and STUDY OF A HEAD WITH FIVE EYES





TIME EYES

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 57½ x 45 inches (146 x 114 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



11/11







TALKATIVE

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 20 x 16 inches (51 x 40,5 cm)

POISON

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 20 x 16 inches (51 x 40,5 cm)

ACID

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 20 x 16 inches (51 x 40,5 cm)

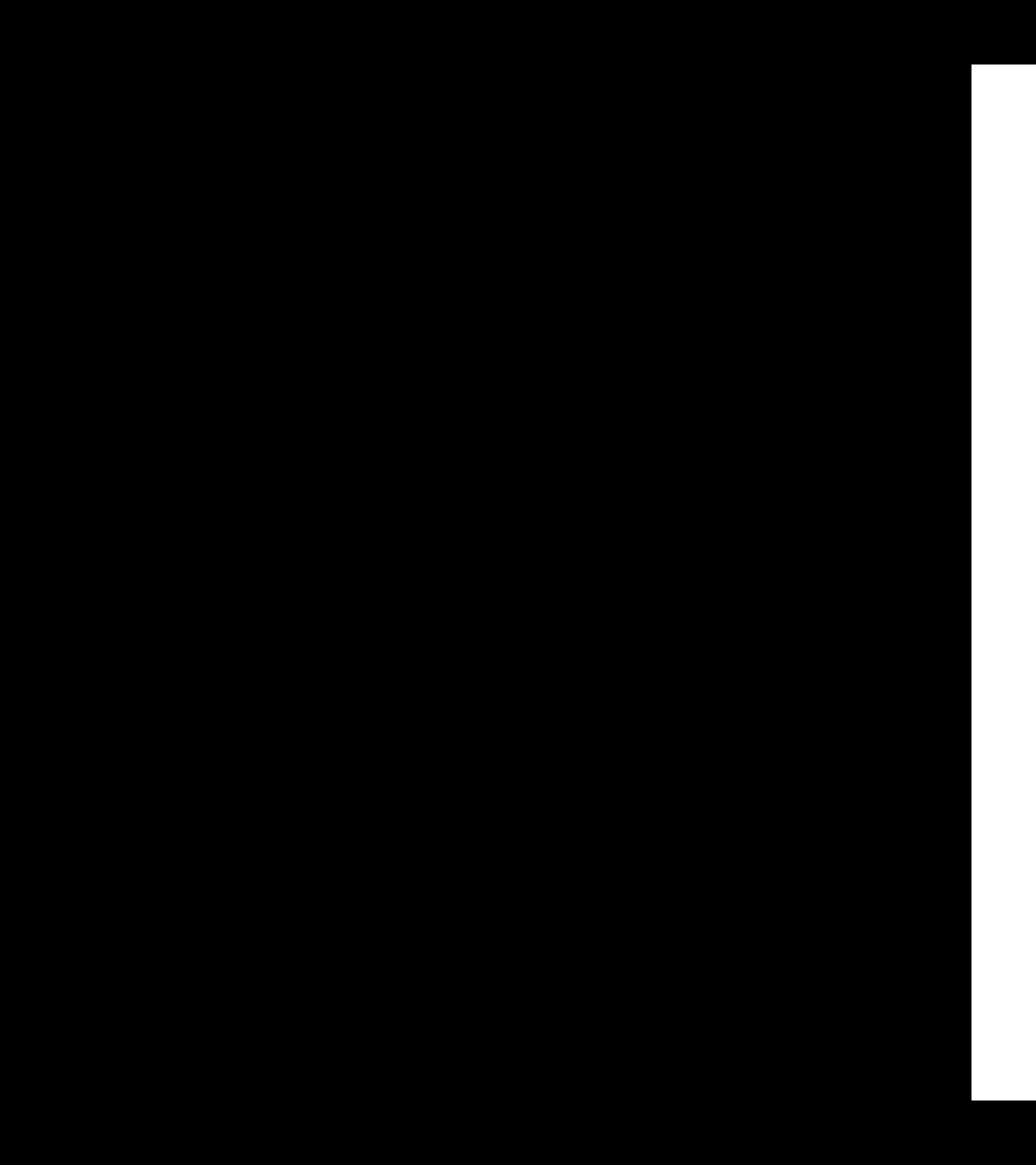


DOGOMATIC
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 20 x 16 inches (51 x 40,5 cm)



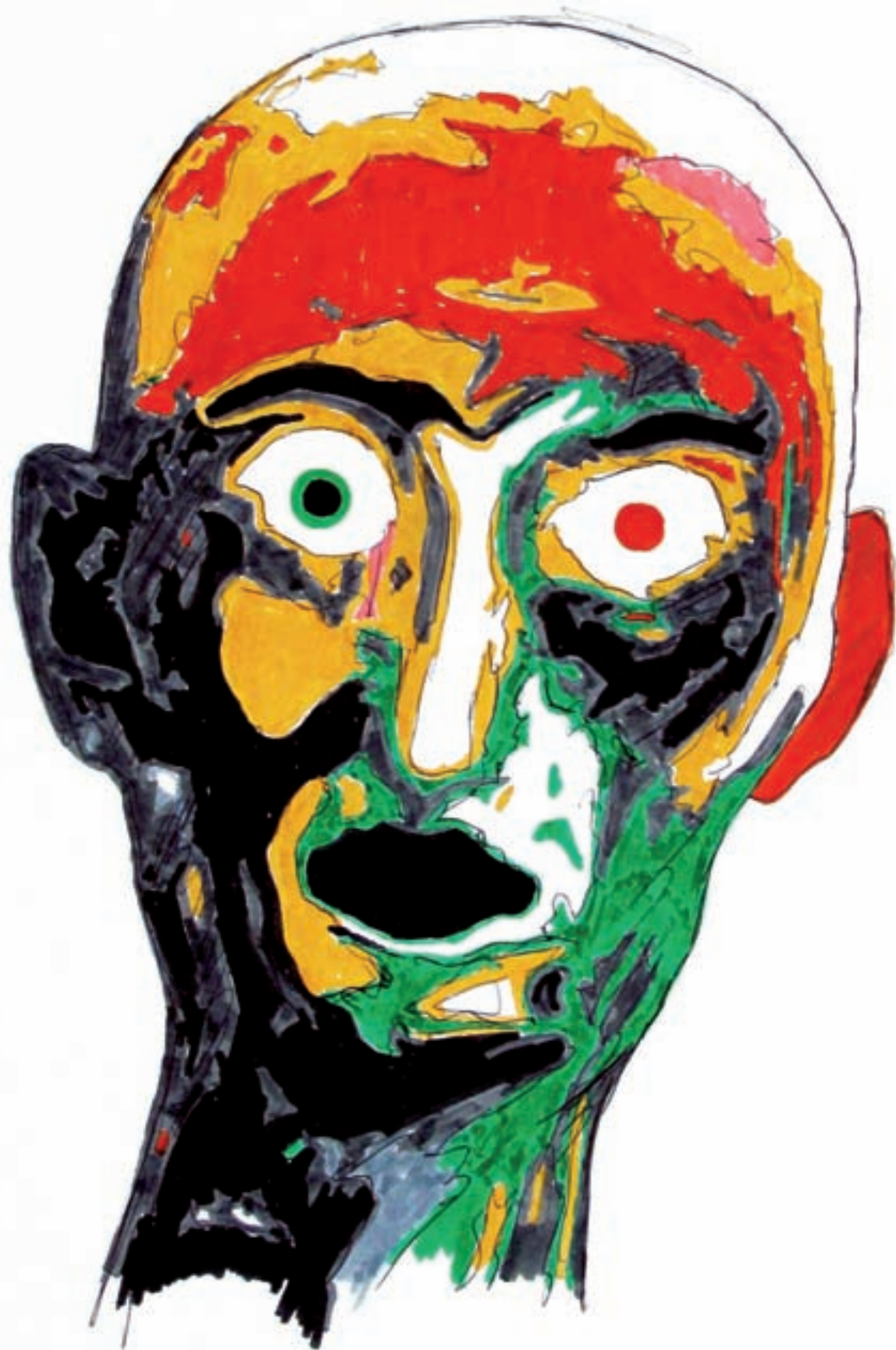
SCREWDRIVER

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas. 20 x 16 inches (51 x 40,5 cm)















Ciria: Painting to Stir the Conscience

Esther Esteban

José Manuel Ciria has traditionally been seen in the context of the abstract expressionist painting, which has been so significant for the evolution of contemporary Spanish Art. The massive seemingly random stains and dissonant colors with red, typically overpowering, that are characteristic of his personal visual language have been the main reason behind his work's association with the aforementioned tendency. But apart from that initial categorization, Ciria's work has been positioned as a discourse that has contributed to the reconsideration of painting within contemporary art practice. Like other major artists Ciria's work, regardless of its style and iconography, must be seen as a cultural beacon rising above the crowded multiplicity of our over saturated post-modern society.

In no way attempting to downplay his ties to Spanish art, the convictions Ciria expressed in the decisiveness of his move to the United States (New York to be precise, where he has lived since late 2005) should be seen in the light of reinvention and exploration, spiritual strength and courage. All too many artists remain dormant after their early successes and never manage to escape the labyrinth of market demands that they themselves have created. Escaping from one's self, like someone fleeing an angry mob and confronting the blank canvas covered only in isolation and solitude, is one of the situations in which some artists seek discomfort in order to push beyond the edge, experience new solutions or find new form.

Unquestionably, the period that starts with his show at the Palacio de Velázquez in Madrid and the first grant he was awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture for the Colegio de España in Paris (both in 1994) and his development between that time and the traveling exhibition organized by Seacex in the National Museum, Krolikärnia Palace in Warsaw, the Pasquart Contemporary Art Center in Biel-Bienne and the three museums in Mexico, are all career milestones that establish Ciria as a significant artist internationally. Alongside the work of only a scarce few of his contemporaries, his paintings become a visual representation of that entire period of our contemporary visual sensibility, creating a connection between opposites. It is painting entirely of the *Now* yet also inextricably bound to our tradition. The way light travels over the plastic tarpaulins and canvasses, the volumes generated through the stains and his facility for making textures that create materiality where there is only a completely, utterly flat surface all show the depth of his work.

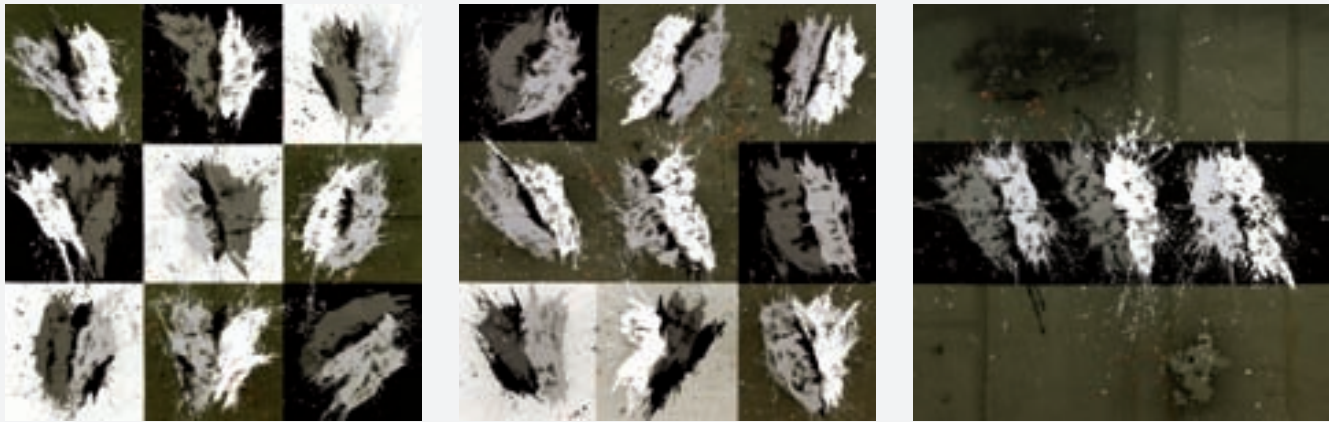
Regardless of how often it is mentioned, what still makes Ciria's paintings *uncommon*, if not entirely unique, is without a doubt the conceptual and theoretical framework he develops in his work. Most critics insist on the importance of the "Notebook - 1990" as a foundational moment for his painting. The interesting thing is that when we gain an understanding of what he's called *Deconstructive Automatic Abstraction* (DAA) and its formulation insofar as analytic fields, themes and series that, according to Ciria, are all turned into a kind of "mechanism" to determine the different formal solutions and investigations he's going to carry out, we're left with a feeling of perplexity caused by the conceptual strength and inventiveness that the entire apparatus expresses. Because, regardless of whether we situate the point of inflection in the development of Ciria's "mature" work in 1994 -to be precise, in preparing the work that would be shown in the since-disappeared El Diente del Tiempo Gallery in Valencia, which would constitute the majority of the work shown at the Palacio de Velázquez- it's quite clear that his paintings from 1991 and 1992 were already definitively immersed in his very personal artistic ideology.



COLORFUL WHIM I and COLORFUL WHIM II. *Abstract Memory Series*. 2009. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)

It's also clear that all that baggage casts an ascetic and spiritual light upon Ciria, who is trying to find in painting a field to develop all kinds of investigations into painting itself. It's a kind of eccentric painting legacy that has formed the personality and mythology of the artist.

Although it may be possible to identify numerous affinities and similarities with the work of other artists, it's undeniable that his approach to painting is epic in its methodological and analytic intentionality. With Ciria, it's not just a matter of quality and flawless resolution. Rather, we perceive how everything we understand painting to be is "picked apart" and, more than that, it's done with such stunning facility that it could even be taken as an affront to some of his contemporaries. Leaving aside José Manuel Ciria's place in Spanish art, let's shift our focus to his time in America. If we take into consideration the number of series the artist has begun and seen through in the last six years it becomes apparent that his assiduousness for investigating and searching hasn't let up for a second. The series are Post-Suprematist (Post-Supremática), Rorschach Heads II (Cabezas de Rorschach II), Crazy Paintings, Structures (Estructuras), La Guardia Place, Schandenmaske Masks (Máscaras Schandenmaske), De-occupations (Desocupaciones), Doodles, Abstract Memory (Memoria Abstracta) and Rorschach Heads III (Cabezas de Rorschach III), while also intermittently continuing previous series such as, The Perverse Garden (El Jardín Perverso) and Constructed Dreams (Sueños Construidos). All those groups or families of paintings can be neatly categorized and clearly sorted by their iconographic form. Sincerely, I know of no other artist who is on a par, moreover because his paintings make anyone who has ever come into contact with his work subsequently able to easily recognize beyond a shade of doubt when they are looking at a painting by this singular artist. At this point, I'd like to focus on the last two New York series: Abstract Memory and Rorschach Heads III. I've had the rare privilege of seeing Ciria paint. Artists usually avoid being watched, and Ciria is no exception, arguing that when someone is watching they try to turn an intimate action into a performance and make their gestures more grandiose, which completely destroys the concentration required for connecting to the work they're doing. Nevertheless, seated in a chair in a corner, without murmuring a word or shifting an inch, scarcely breathing even, I had the opportunity to stay a rather long time watching Ciria work on one of his paintings. Obviously, there were no muses circling round him, neither did it go beyond being just a mere exercise in putting colors onto a canvas lying on the floor. But, the most magical and memorable thing I witnessed during that experience, aside from his obvious facility and his movements, was Ciria's gaze, his way of looking. It was an inquisitive gaze that saw not just with the eyes but with the entire body and, at the risk of overstatement I would even venture to say, with every cell of his being. It is a gaze that the canvas can certainly feel on its own tight skin. The painting that was coming to its culmination at that time was part of the Abstract Memory series. Something else I saw that surprised me was how the "controlled chance" Ciria has commented on so much doesn't depend quite so much on chance, rather it could more aptly be likened to a choreographed ballet. The resulting texture grows with every successive painting session, precisely controlling how the oil paint dries.



LA BUSQUEDA DEL SENTIDO (TRIPTYCH). *Abstract Memory Series*. 2009. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)

Insofar as their reading, the paintings from this series could be clearly divided into two completely separate actions. On one hand, the organization and creation of the geometric ground, and on the other, the sessions where Ciria's much talked about gestural stains are articulated. I'm unsure whether even an adept viewer would be able to ascertain the time difference between the two, let's call them, "layers". It's amazing how both "intervals" merge and integrate with each other so perfectly naturally. *Abstract Memory* becomes a prodigy of small formal solutions, which I would only wish to qualify as being of extraordinary experiential value. According to Ciria, *Abstract Memory* is an exercise in revision, or re-thinking, *Masks of the Glance*, the series that came immediately before his move to New York. The length of time that separates the two series is five years. However, Ciria maintains that one is a continuation of the other, aside from two fundamental differences. Firstly, the compartmentalizing or geometric field has become significantly more relevant while previously, in *Masks of the Glance*, the geometric elements were typically squares, rectangles or different sized bars of greater or lesser predominance in the composition or simple linear cuts either across the ground or across the "motifs" of the paintings and that were always in neutral colors, black, gray and only occasionally red or orange or a drop of yellow. Conversely, in *Abstract Memory* the abstract elements have grown exponentially to cover the entire ground and, likewise, the palette of colors has grown to include ochers, pale yellows, orange and red earth tones, blues, greens, pinks and a jarring eruption of aluminum. Additionally, in the gestural "layer" we see the arrival of orange, a color rarely found in Ciria's work.

The other major difference between *Abstract Memory* and *Masks of the Glance* lies in how in most of the compositions the stain is enclosed within one of the "windows" that are created by the ground and which, consequently, means the stains have to be smaller. This characteristic is found throughout practically the entire series with the exception of a very few compositions where the stains travel freely over the compartmentalized ground. In summary, the evolution of this series in regards to the one preceding it is characterized by its having more geometric radicalness, a coloristic expansiveness, how the stain is subjugated to the ground and the persistence of the number nine, with all its magical and spiritual associations. It can also be seen how in countless paintings a kind of concentric frame appears within the picture plane. But despite their profound differences, both series are clearly of the same spirit and come together to form a clearly recognizable node. Without stretching too far, we can fit almost the totality of the American series within the "protocol" that DAA provided. Many of them, as Carlos Delgado has pointed out, are like revisions of the artist's earlier series. Accordingly, we can draw strong parallels between the Post-Suprematist series from 2005-2006 and the Automats (Autómatas) series from 1984-1985, and between *La Guardia Placa* from 2006-2007 and the series titled *Men, Hands, Organic Forms and Signs* (Hombres, Manos, Formas Orgánicas y Signos) from 1989. There is a deepening of a trail already traveled down and that is then made new again. Nevertheless, it is hard to see José Manuel Ciria's last series, *Rorschach Heads III*, in quite the same light. The artist has said that what triggered the series didn't come out of formal or conceptual investigations, but rather from wholly personal experiences. The death of the artist's father from a brain tumor, suffering his loss and his



CUADRADO AMARILLO, LAS AUSENCIAS and VENTANA HABITADA. *Abstract Memory Series*. 2010. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)

journey to see the Moai of Easter Island are what led Ciria to paint a painting that's impossible to understand within the context of the artist's body of work: Oh! Wild days (Oh! Días salvajes) from 2010. If in other series figuration had previously appeared, (for example, Homage to Late Malevich, the figures and nudes of the La Guardia Place series, the icon of the mask (Schandenmaske Masks) or the stickmen in Doodles), Rorschach Heads III should be seen as a series that is extremely easy to read figuratively, while not ceasing to be abstract. An alchemical apparatus that contains everything we know to be Ciria; the strength and boldness of his compositions, the "stitching" of the abstract stains, the powerful presence, the textures, drips, the "clouds" and the distinctive atmosphere... However, Rorschach Heads III is, perhaps more than any other series by the artist, a group of paintings with a clearly political intention. Distortion, the ellipse, and the grotesque shake hands with broad fields of emotional vocation. Faces that frighten us, or perhaps faces showing fear, aggressive gestures seen every day in contemporary society, desolate tenderness, a lost gaze, rage against one's limitations, the unhappiness of solitude, isolation, lonely luckless figures, raucous gestures, deformity: the Rorschach Heads evoke so many different things in the viewer that they're certainly a little scary. But, the fear comes from the thoughts they provoke in the viewer. It might be better to bury your head in the sand like an ostrich and ignore these paintings. At any rate, it's a lot easier for us to look at other series, and Ciria himself has commented that "abstraction is not the right vehicle for expressing concrete ideas", even though the underlying intention might be one and the same.

As I mentioned above, whoever comes into contact with Ciria's painting are invariably always able to recognize his visual language afterwards. We see dozens of shows in art galleries and museums every year that vanish completely from our memory. On the contrary, whoever has followed Ciria's work will agree with me that we can remember a lot of his shows in quite a bit of detail. I don't think I'm wrong in saying that, when I ask myself about my reaction to the paintings that make up the Rorschach Heads III series, I find that this group of work is indelibly carved into my memory, that it has created strong roots. Many of the gestures, expressions, or the color and the eyes are etched into our brains and retinas in such a way that we can never get rid of them. It's painting going full throttle aimed at our conscience.

To wrap up, I would like to comment on two more points. The first is the iconographic inventiveness and prowess of all of the paintings in the series, which could probably be sorted into three large groups: the paintings most closely approaching realism, the paintings characterized by free inventiveness (mostly small format), and a third group of paintings with an unequivocal inclination towards the grotesque and that in some way directly re-connect to the Spanish and European traditions. In 1490, Leonardo da Vinci was the first artist to make paintings that were intended to be grotesque caricatures. Since that time, we can pick out a number of artists who have also shown a predisposition for this kind of painting, from the extraordinary Goya in his Black Paintings to others including Odilon Redon or Edvard Munch, the sculptor Messerschmidt or James Ensor, and we can't leave out German neo-expressionism and Antonio Saura.

What I'm proposing, is that within just one series we are confronted by unexpected twists and turns and a kind of gallimaufry where everything goes as long as it might be used to reach the stigmatized iconography of the head-sign. This leads into the second point I want to make. I have a magnificent catalog published by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1996 about Picasso and the portrait. Leafing through the book, we can begin to understand that for Picasso every little painting, every sketch or every drawing offers an inexhaustible opportunity for formal invention. From small sketches to completely finished work, cubist heads to caricatures, stunningly beautiful realist compositions and distorted portraits of women, the blue, rose, analytic, synthetic and neoclassical periods or the late work, the faces full of light and the shadowy portraits, the numerous self-portraits and spatial games, all using a simple portrait-head motif. And, Ciria does exactly the same thing in Rorschach Heads III. In every painting of the series he invents a new universe, but there's one important difference: in these paintings he is not searching for a canon of beauty, formal achievement or serendipitous compositional structures, but quite the opposite. The language we find here is thoroughly contemporary and problematic. The values referred to above have been altered with the intention of creating paintings fraught with brazenness and discomfort, angry ranting or even horror; a reflexive universe inhabited by solitary, caricatured or terrible personages staring us in the eye, clamoring for a more just society.



GRID POLYPTYCH WITH 36 HEADS

Rorschach Heads III Series, 2010. Oil on canvas, 20 x 18 inches each. (51 x 45,5 cm). Collection of the artist





WHAT HAVE YOU SEEN? (TWENTY-ONE WEEKS)
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



SOMETIMES MY MIND IS FRAMED
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)





SAD JIMMY
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



DIRTY JOE
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)



HEADS PORTAFOLIO. Edited by the artist. 30 copies of each digital stamp. *Rorschach Heads III Series*. 2010.
31 x 27 inches (80 x 70 cm). Including SOUTH PARK HEAD, ROUND-HEAD KID, THE KICKER, BOAT HEAD and SELF-PORTRAIT

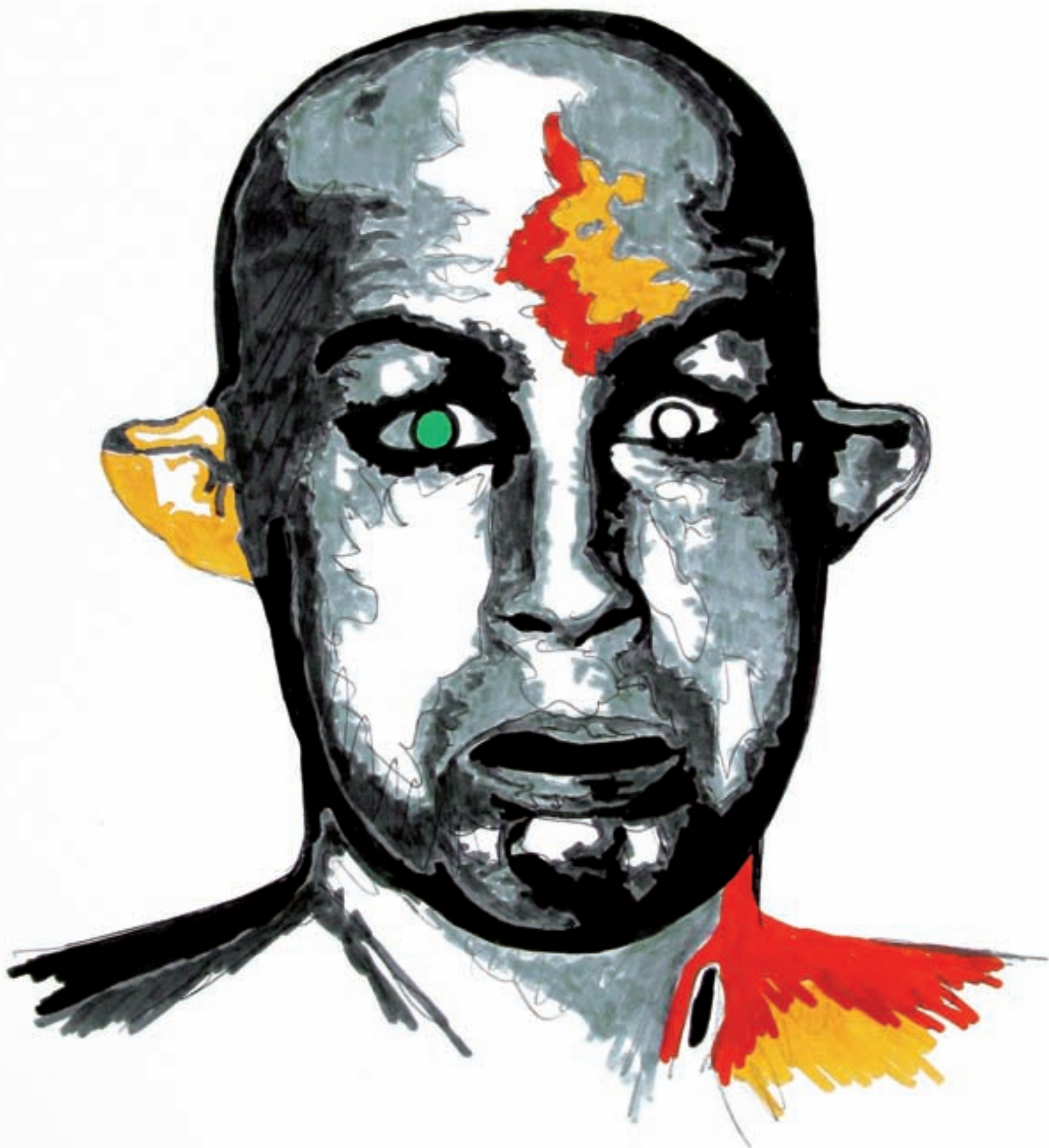


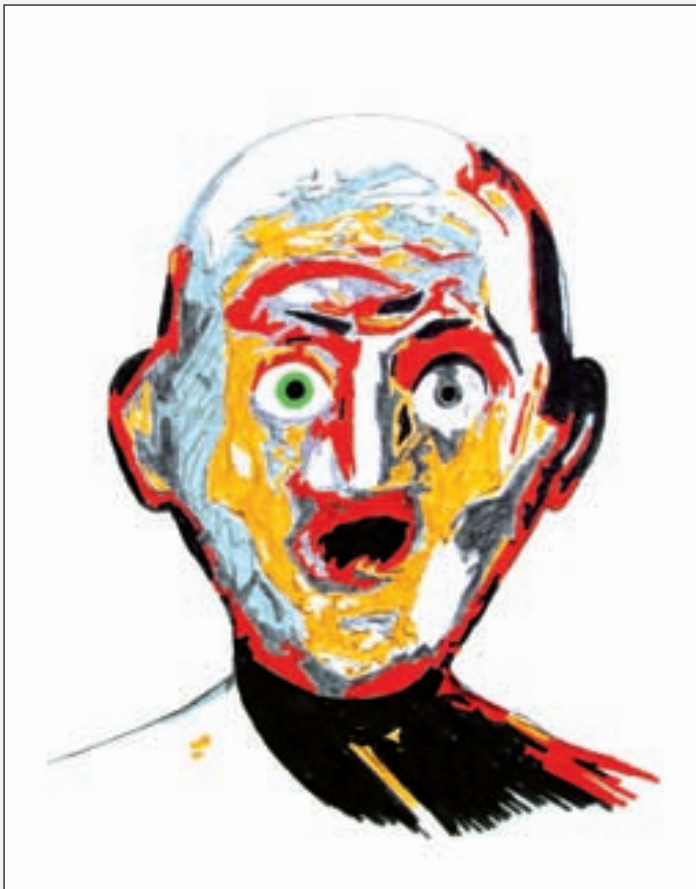


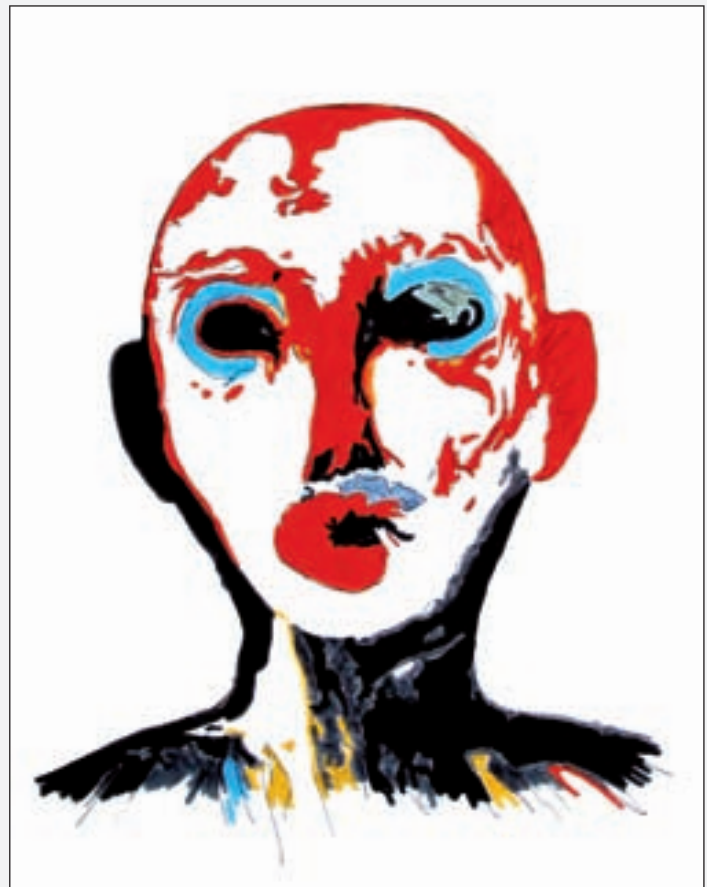
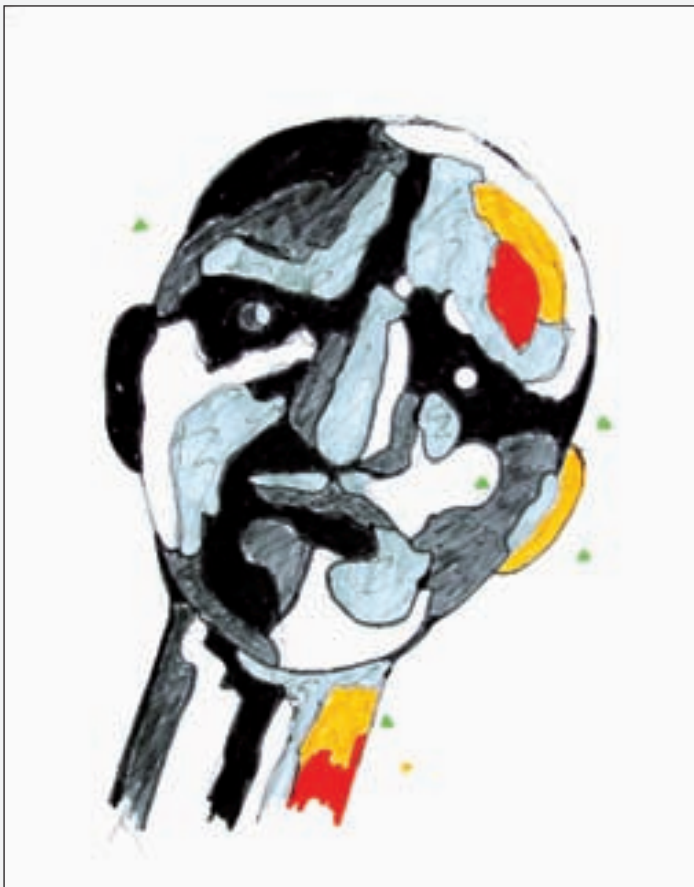
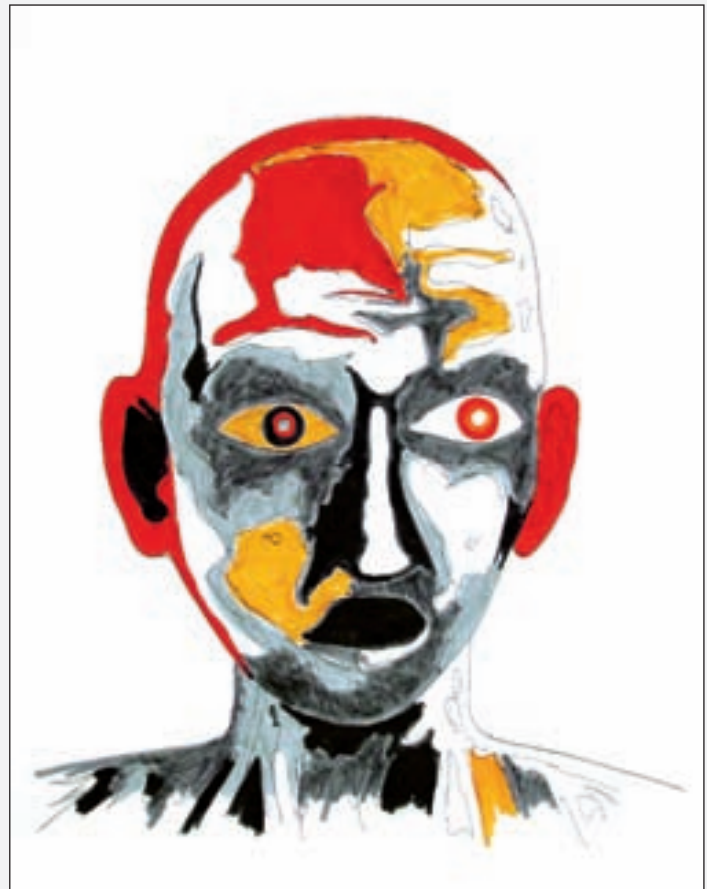
I LOVE YOU!
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)









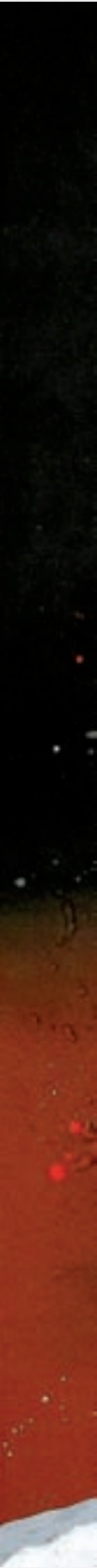




ANGER

Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)





PORTRAIT OF JAVIER REMEDIOS (WITH HANDMADE BREAD GLASSES)
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, Cáceres





FAYUM HEAD I (TO EVA)

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 18 x 18 inches (45,5 x 45,5 cm). Private Collection, Madrid. Courtesy Arteinversión Space, Madrid



FAYUM HEAD III

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil on canvas. 18 x 18 inches (45,5 x 45,5 cm). Private Collection, Madrid. Courtesy Arteinversión Space, Madrid



I HATE WHAT I SEE!
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm)



SWEET LIKE A TEDDY BEAR
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm)



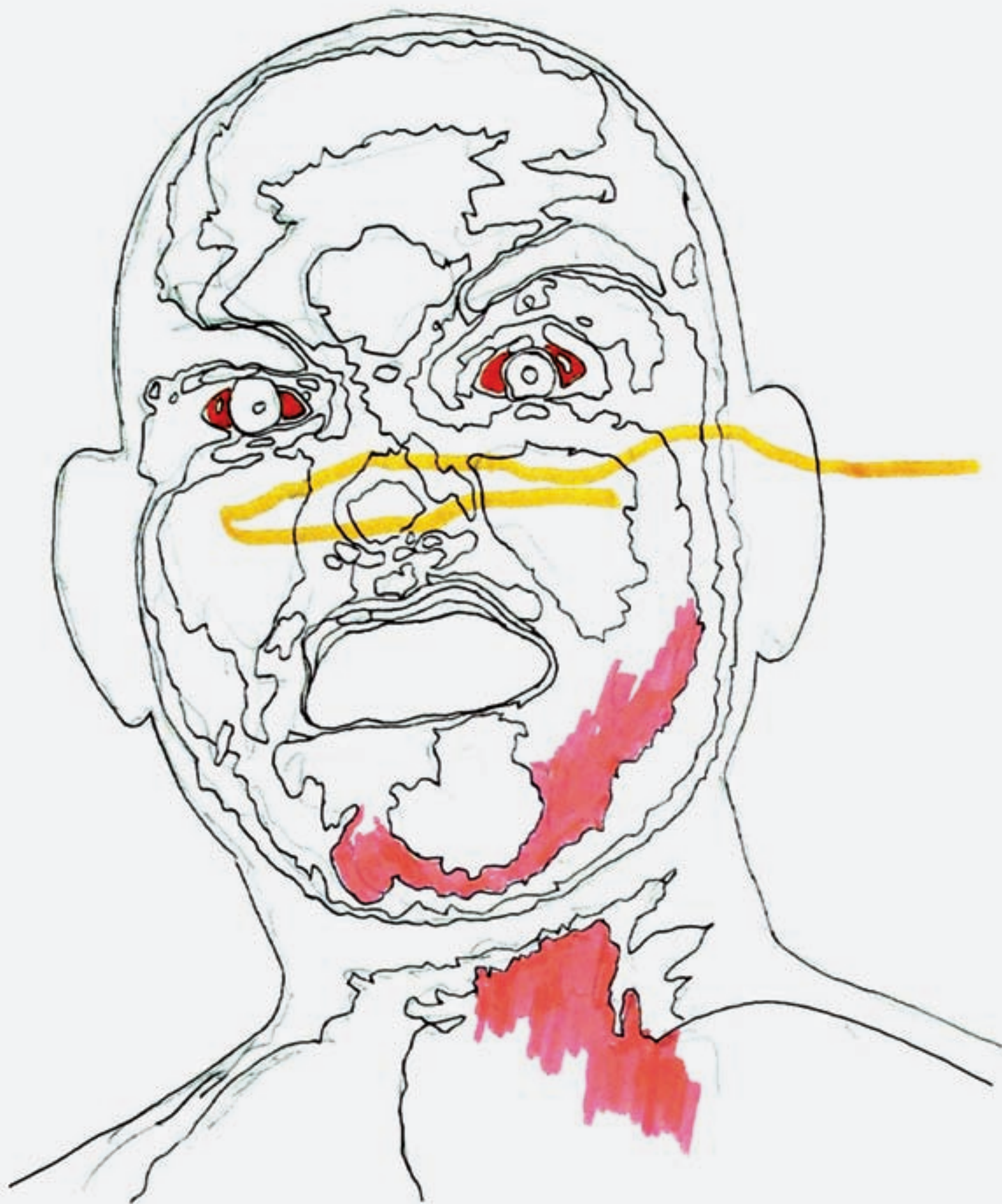
THE FAYUM POLYPHYC
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. Several sizes





CROSSED HEAD DRAWING

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil, acrylic, charcoal and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm)





The Execution of the Soul: Recent Paintings by Jose Manuel Ciria

Robert C. Morgan

The term “painting about painting” was frequently used among formalist painters and critics in lower Manhattan during the 1960s. In those days the veritable act of painting was enough to make the case. To be engaged as a painter spoke for itself. Painting was an abstract conduit that carried its own meaning. It had its own cause and effect relationship and needed no further external reason to justify its existence. To cover the surface of a panel or stretched canvas unburdened by imagery was viewed as a complex mental and physical act, the assumption being that there was always more happening than what met the eye. But things have changed in recent decades as new time-based media have evolved to the foreground of attention. Today painting has become more than a process, and to some extent has been obscured through overdetermined rhetoric. On the other hand, some painters are viewing their work less in “conceptual” terms and are more inclined to invent forms that challenge the meaning of what is visible. These artists are moving beyond painting as a mute signifier isolated within categories of abstraction and representation. One of the leading younger painters in this regard is Jose Manuel Ciria.

Committed to retaining the act of painting liberated from categories, Ciria appears to bypass the obvious in order to confront something more personal. His desire to discover new forms of internal equivalence supersedes historical motives and aesthetic effects. While his paintings appear predetermined at the outset, they move toward a gestural abandon. Intentions of this sort are to some degree imitations. They contain a causal complicity that either limits or expands their function as painting. By breaking through the surface, Ciria’s paintings transform assumptions of meaning into acts of defiance. The layering of paint disguises the past —what Ciria understands as Mnemosyne or “images going back in time.” There are moments when the Mnemosyne rides a torrential sea as images shuttle about the surface at the perennial risk of going overboard. For this reason the painter attends to the shifting weight of what he envisions within the act of painting.

Spaniards tend to be less offended by the disengagement of meaning in such art given their distaste for Puritanical effects. As Ciria knows, the best and most heroic paintings will transcend the encrustation of time. Here memory remains buoyant within a sea of tactile images as Mnemosyne speaks of a rising presence emanating through history. Encapsulated by time, one may sense the heart and soul of a culture in early paintings, such as *El Espíritu de la Memoria* (1994), *El Último Instante de la Tradición* (1998), and *Noche en Torrejón el Rubio I* (1999), through a haze of disappearance, yet utterly without remorse. These paintings are so persistently endowed to Spanish culture that they cannot restrain their need to move ahead in search of timelessness. Painting on this level admits a reverberating internal force, somewhere between artist and culture, where it eventually becomes an heroic representation of time. Such paintings go beyond the scope of expressionism by imagining what timeless time might actually become. Ciria confronts an age of virtual deceit where the deluge of electronic images dissolves any prospect for the sensory apparatus to perceive the possibility of truth. While the poetic darkness of Federico Garcia-Lorca and the painterly visions of Motherwell and Tapies may still hover in an exfoliated landscape, there are unsuspecting moments of brilliance, like indeterminate fireworks bursting in the firmament overhead. These fireworks give access to the romantic soul of Spain, a tribute the artist refuses to relinquish. This may further suggest that the promotion of a transculture throughout the networks and blogs of globalization cannot so easily dismiss the premises



BLUE CIRCLE, MASKS MISCELLANEOUS and SOMEONE DICTATES THE SHADOW. *Schandenmaske Masks Series*. 2009. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 79 x 79 inches (200 x 200 cm). Collection of the artist

of a culture that the painter Ciria makes clear in each wash, stroke, and smudge. This gives his work a vibrant elasticity and the murmur of truth. In this sense, the tactile dimension of his paintings proffers the antidote to the overwhelming arrogance of transculture.

Jose Manuel Ciria's early career as an abstract painter has achieved a certain prominence. His antecedents in late Modern and contemporary Spanish painting, including Saura, Tàpies, and Sicilia, are well-known. While Ciria understands that the medium of painting harbors its own meaning even before the artist's brush reaches the surface, there is always something else to be done to push the painting further. A sudden stroke, a vibrant color, another stroke, a fractal shape that splatters against itself, another hint of Eros. Titanium becomes the hedonistic vehicle of color. The building and infusion of these formal chromatic elements ascend into a stratosphere of meaning as time is evoked again. Here is a thought by the writer Guillermo Solana: "Time does not merely nibble at the outlines of the shapes; it wears, erodes, corrodes, devours the extension of the smudge from the inside. Time opens its way along the cracks, and the painting, in a strange contrast with its freshness, acquires the appearance of a *ruin*." Yet, even in the process of making this constructive/deconstructive sequence of painterly actions and events, Ciria looks toward the final destruction of the surface for a kind of miraculous rehabilitation. More than a trace, these actions push beyond the boundaries of intention, outside any preconception or intention into another unknown territory to secure its visual tactility.

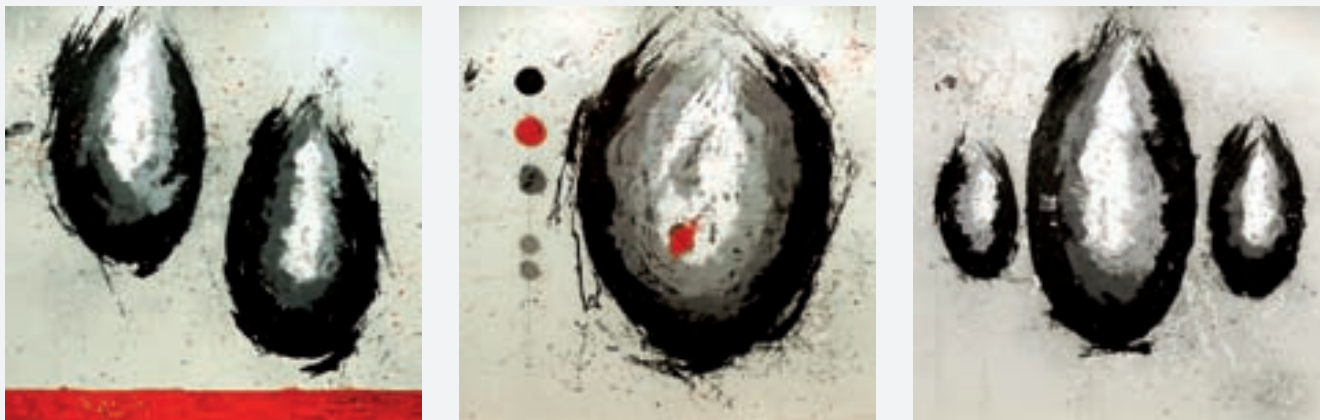
In referring to a group of abstract works from 2009 shown in Paris at Galerie Couteron — based on a motif begun in 2005, titled *Serie Compartimentaciones* — the artist begins each painting with a grid assembled with various units of color. Once the pattern is in place, Ciria moves against the precision and proceeds to dissemble it. His painterly attack implies a kind of demolition of something previously built. The controlled splatters of paint — using various combinations of red, yellow, black, orange gray, and white — suggest a contrapuntal aggressivity, a violent interface with the smooth architectonics of the surface, a strategic bombing involving microchips set for detonation. The formal placement of the grid-structure in contrast to the relatively controlled gestures gives the painting a tense, static quality — a dynamic interlude, pulsating from one action to another. The "lyricism and construction" noted by the eminent Juan Manuel Bonet in a series of earlier works is more calculated in the recent ones, similar in approach (though not style) to an early abstract Guston, for instance, or a Norman Blume or the nascent marks and colors of a Grace Hartigan, all painters associated with a later phase of abstract expressionism in New York.

Whether one paints from the position of representation or abstraction, the layered faceting by which the painting evolves is what finally becomes content. One might say that Ciria intrinsically understands his direction as a painter as an intellectual pursuit. For example, his idea of painting would be in line with the twentieth century Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset.

In retrospect, Ortega's well-known essay from the early 1950s offers a proto-structuralist argument advocating a synchronic passageway between two diachronic movements: art and philosophy. Whereas scholars traditionally interpret these historical evolutions as being separate and distinct, Ortega perceived them as moving in a parallel relationship to one another. Thus, what was happening in the history of art at any given time might, in fact, give clarification to the advance of a major philosophical concept, and vice versa.

Without overstating the case, Ciria's interest in parallel bifurcations as a painter is worth noting. As a painter who emerged on the scene at the outset of the 1990s, Ciria has shown a propensity for applying a wash of raw umber as a soluble ground upon which a loose grid of white blocks suggests architectonic flotation on the surface. In other works, twisted lines drawn from his masterful brush are placed beside a loose grid constructed from sheets of newsprint with his familiar roguish blots or smears are placed in some chaotic uniform order. The familiar explosions discussed in the recent series of abstract paintings from the Paris exhibition, where blazing gestures are shown against a precise color grid, are transposed — transported — to a recent series of imaginative portraits. Here we conjure the resonance of unknown amorphous heads — semi-abstract, yet pulsating with vigor — as if to bracket a structural trace positioned on the verge of near collapse or disappearance, as if to dissolve any formidable intention and simply allow the painting to become what it is. Within the scope of these eternal abstract heads, we catch a glimmer of the artist's execution, suggesting not only a sublime manner of painting, but an exorcism on the penumbra of pitched emotion, a furious belch from Saturn upon eating his own. Could these heads be the multiple transmutations of a menaced ogre in the sweep of history, caught between the inevitable robotic post-humanoid and the loss of selfhood wound toward the throes of extinction? Ciria's pigments point toward the ritual of the mask, also well-known in Spanish culture, as the incipient disguise that emits the morose implication of human decadence. As the dense harmonies of color start to recoil through the tension of surfeit, given to a metaphorical conquest of Being, we encounter familiar tropes, further obsessed by Ortega and Heidegger, both of whom staggered in the mid-day heat of philosophy's twin: painting!

In coming to the *Rorschach Series III* — What are these heads, really? At first, they appear as embolden reifications, representing the dissemblance of selfhood, given to the everyday world of an absurd comic pathos where psychological damage hovers over the artist's imaginary subjects. In each case, the material world exacerbates both mind and body through invisible tensions and ultra-stress denominators incited through immaterial software. Each painting was completed in 2010 and was painted in oil and aluminum on canvas. The format is square and the scale is relatively large, ranging from 150 cm to 250 cm. The confrontational aspect of the majority of the heads is augmented through an abstract frontal aspect, thus revealing their source in the Russian Kasimir Malevich's late abstract figures from the 1920s to which Ciria pays tribute in his *Serie Post-Suprematica* (2006). The titles of the various heads are interesting in that they illuminate a



DUPLICATED CASTLE OF THE PYRENEES, HIGH GRADE LEFT INSULA GLIOMA and DESCENDANTS. Schandenmaske Masks Series. 2009. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 118 x 118 inches (300 x 300 cm). Collection of the artist

particular emotional aspect both psychological and social that contributes to the absurd aspect felt in his imagined subjects. Even so, there is more than a hint that many of these paintings are intended as self-portraits. Therefore, the metaphorical title of this essay is two-fold: one, the execution of the soul as in the execution of a painting in which the underlying precept is a representation of the self, or two, the artist's clear decision to immolate or deconstruct himself in the act of painting in order to reincarnate himself as the subject in *Rorschach Series III*.

The latter fabulist aspect of these paintings is extraordinary to the extent that the desire to self-efface is so indelibly Spanish. Paradoxically, this requires a re-emergence of the Ego as a fail-safe mechanism for the loss of selfhood through the consuming power of the Id. This, in turn, is inextricably bound to the cultural motive behind Ciria's desire to redefine painting as a condition of selfhood that exceeds choosing between pure abstraction and self-conscious expressionism as if one approach could be repressed in favor of the other. This contradicts the Puritanical idea understated by Americans in which an imperative is made between pragmatism and transcendentalism. In contrast, Ciria employs the viability of both as an equivocation accounting for the temporal balance between the two. Having been raised in Spain, and now living in New York, *Rorschach Portraits III* is a testimony to his ability to comprehend and apply the advantages of both sides, which was also the position of Freud, lest we go all the way with civilization and its discontents. In this sense, Ciria's heads may be primal — not entirely removed from CoBrA, particularly in the abstract figures of Karel Appel — yet, at the same time, Ciria updates this critical history to a new level. In viewing *Acid Rain*, — an exceptional painting showing a three-quarter view of an anguished male head — the general aspect of despair or rage appears less to the point than the psychological turmoil within the mind of someone who makes decisions against the better interests of people alive in the twenty-first century. When I look at *Oh Shit! (The Party is Over)*, the message is clear that abusive corruption in the financial industry was a reality that everyone knew but few were willing to admit. In both cases we are discussing the advent of meaning in painting, the crucible to which the medium has been directed and occasionally rejected since the Paleolithic artisans who worked in the caves of Brazil and southern France. Jose Manuel Ciria has shown that categories of painting are less important than the depth to which we prospect meaning through the painter's investigation of selfhood. His work raises questions regarding the marketing of art “after the end of art” — to cite a phase used by philosopher and critic, Arthur Danto. The dark side of these forays into the endgame strategies of institutional art has left many observers in a state of cultural paralysis. In the meantime, Ciria has gone another direction. He has gone outside the frizzled seduction of kitsch and emerged with a different, more reflective point of view. His remarkable *Rorschach Series III* suggests a viable and necessary approach to how we think about art. These are incisive paintings neither to be rationalized nor taken lightly. They are paintings that fulfill the destiny of art by going beyond institutional media in order to become significant.

Robert C. Morgan is a critic, writer, artist, poet, and art historian who holds both an MFA degree in Sculpture and a Ph.D. in Aesthetics and Art History. In addition to his many writings and catalog essays on Spanish artists, his book *Del Arte a La Idea* (2003) was published by Akal. In 2006, a lithographic edition of his poetry, *El Sirocco de la Tarde* (in collaboration with the artist Willi Ramos, with an afterward by Juan Manuel Bonet), was published by Vandermaal Ediciones de Madrid and Ediciones Arte Dos Grafico de Bogota, Colombia. In 1999, he was honored with the first Arcale award in Salamanca for his writing as an international critic. Other books translated into Spanish include the first edition of his landmark book, *El Fin del Mundo del Arte y Otros Ensayos* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1998), later published in a more complete English edition by Allworth Press (NYC), titled *The End of the Art World*. As Professor Emeritus in Art History from the Rochester Institute of Technology and Adjunct Professor in the Graduate Fine Arts at Pratt Institute, Professor Morgan was given a Fulbright Senior Scholar award to do research in the Republic of Korea (2005). In addition to his books in Spanish, he is translated into Korean, Chinese, Farsi, Hebrew, Finnish, Italian, French, German, Turkish, Norwegian, and Polish. As an artist, he continues to work as a painter, installation, and performance artist.

ANORADO
SAURA





WHAT?

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil on canvas.
18 x 18 inches (45,5 x 45,5 cm)
Private Collection, New York. Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York

YOUNG WRITER

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil on canvas.
18 x 18 inches (45,5 x 45,5 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York



EVERYBODY LOVES ME

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
18 x 18 inches (45,5 x 45,5 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York

BLACK EYES

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2010. Oil on canvas.
18 x 18 inches (45,5 x 45,5 cm). Courtesy Stux Gallery, New York







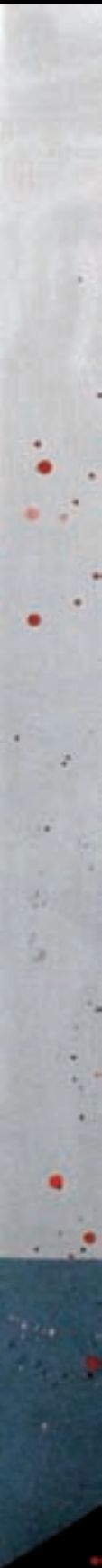


NIGHT FACE

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). Private Collection, New York. Courtesy Arteinversión, Madrid



HEAD ON A GEOMETRICAL FIELD
Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm)



HELMET HEAD

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm)





CYCLOPS

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Oil-Stick and collage on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152, 5 cm). Private Collection, New York. Courtesy Arteinversión Space, Madrid



CRINKLED CONSTRUCTIVISM I

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium and collage on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152,5 cm)



CRINKLED CONSTRUCTIVISM II

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium and collage on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152,5 cm)



CRINKLED CONSTRUCTIVISM III
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium and collage on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152,5 cm)



CRINKLED CONSTRUCTIVISM IV

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium and collage on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152,5 cm)



CRINKLED CONSTRUCTIVISM V
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium and collage on Gator-board. 60 x 60 inches (152,5 x 152,5 cm)



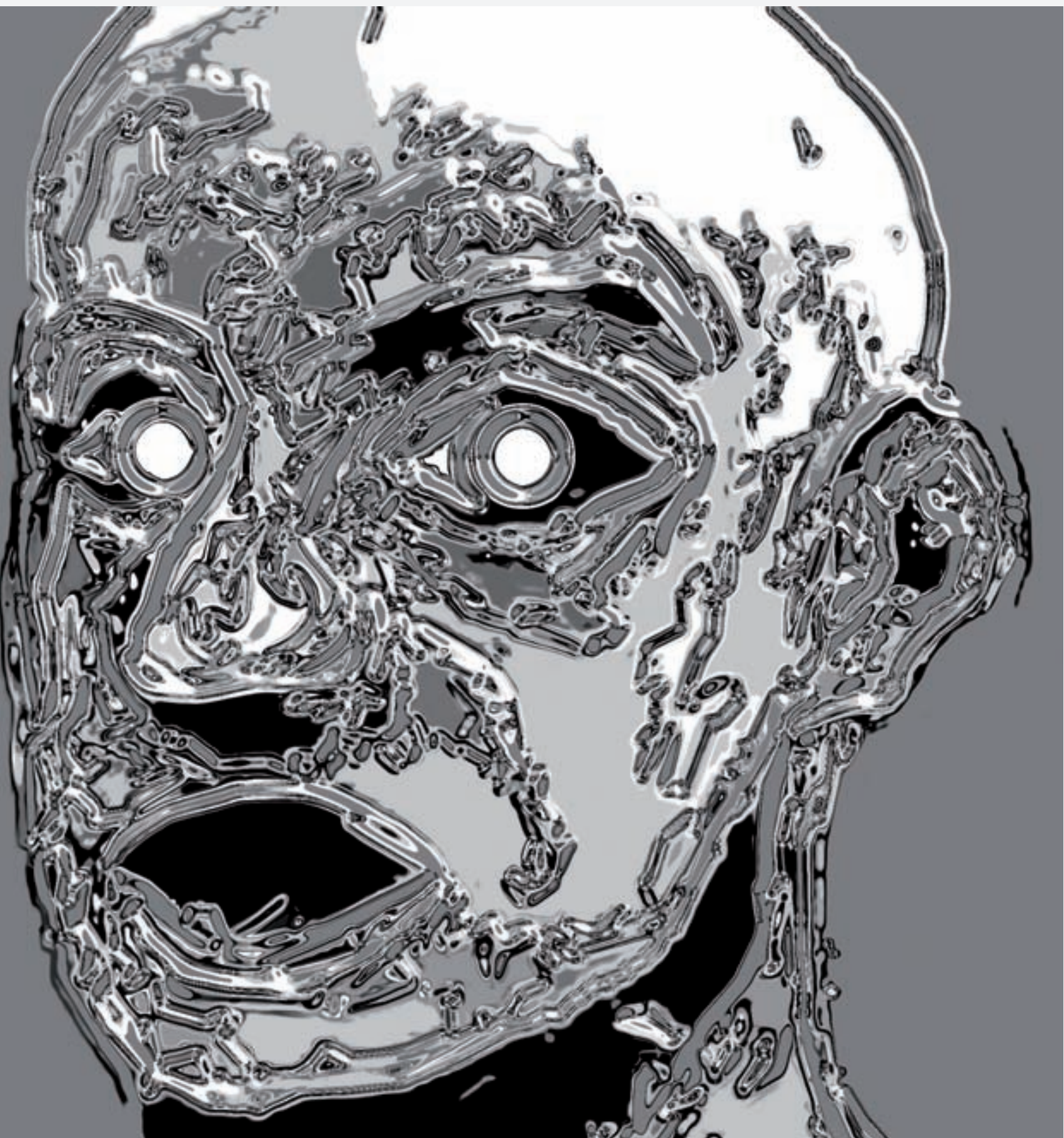






THE OBSERVER

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). **Crome Heads** Portfolio.
Edited by Arteinversion Space. 5 copies of each digital graphic





SQUARE MINDED

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). *Crome Heads Portfolio*.
Edited by Arteinversion Space. 5 copies of each digital graphic



WATER FIGURE

Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011, 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm), Crome Heads Portfolio.
Edited by Arteinversion Space. 5 copies of each digital graphic



VERTICAL LINES

Rorschach Heads III Series, 2011, 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm), Crome Heads Portfolio.
Edited by Arteinversion Space. 5 copies of each digital graphic



WORDS INVENTOR

Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. 59 x 59 inches (150 x 150 cm). *Crome Heads Portfolio*.
Edited by Arteinversion Space. 5 copies of each digital graphic











THE CHICK-PEAS COUNTER *Rorschach Heads III Series*, 2011. Oil and aluminum on canvas, 79 x 150 inches (200 x 380 cm)





BROKEN
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium on canvas. 98 x 106 inches (269 x 350 cm)



THE ADVISOR
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium on canvas. 98 x 106 inches (269 x 350 cm)







ONE MORE EMPTY HEAD
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium on canvas. 98 x 106 inches (269 x 350 cm)





TALKING HEAD
Rorschach Heads III Series. 2011. Mixed medium on canvas. 98 x 106 inches (269 x 350 cm)





JOSÉ M. CIRIA

Born February 3,1960. Manchester (United Kingdom)
Lives & Works in New York City and Madrid

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2011

Valencian Institute of Modern Art (IVAM), Valencia.
Amarillo Museum of Art (AMoA), Texas.
Cordeiros Gallery, Oporto (Portugal).
Stefan Stux Gallery, Nueva York.
- 2010

Fine Arts Circle, Madrid.
City Council Palace, Orense.
De Prado Monastery, Culture Counsellerie, Govern of Castilla and León, Valladolid.
Museum of Modern Art (MAMM), Medellín (Colombia).
ArteInversión Space, Madrid.
Miramar Building, Sitges.
- 2009

Zoellner Arts Center, LUAG Lehigh University, Bethelhem.
Museum of Art from El Salvador (MARTE), San Salvador (El Salvador).
Museum of Anthropology and Contemporary Art (MAAC), Guayaquil (Ecuador).
Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC), Santiago de Chile (Chile).
Cervantes Institute, Chicago.
Kursaal. Kubo - Kutxa Space, (with José Zugasti). San Sebastian.
Christopher Cutts Gallery, Toronto (Canada).
Annta Gallery, Madrid.
“Beyond the Border”. Christopher Cutts Gallery, San Diego.
Couteron Gallery, Paris (France).
- 2008

Alfândega Museum, Porto (Portugal).
Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
Paris City Hall, Salle des Fêtes, Paris (France).
Carlos de Amberes Foundation, Madrid.
Museum of Modern Art, Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic).
National Gallery, Kingston (Jamaica).
Gema Llamazares Gallery, Gijón.
Art Rouge Gallery, Miami.
- 2007

National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA), Buenos Aires (Argentina).
National Museum of Fine Arts, Neuquén (Argentina).
San Esteban Church, Murcia.
Christopher Cutts Gallery, Toronto (Canada).
Caixanova Cultural Center, Pontevedra.
Caixanova Cultural Center, Vigo.
Gema Llamazares Gallery, Gijón.
- 2006

Museum of Contemporary Art Ateneo de Yucatán (MACAY), Mérida (Mexico).
Fernando Silió Gallery, Santander.
Pedro Peña Gallery, Marbella.
- 2005

Kunsthalle Museum Center for the Arts PasquArt, Bern (Switzerland).
Museum of Contemporary Spanish Engraving (MGEC), Marbella.
Santa Catalina Castle, Cádiz.
Museum of Abstract Art Manuel Felguérez, Zacatecas (Mexico).
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chihuahua (Mexico).
Vértice Gallery, Oviedo.

- Bach Quatre Contemporary Art, Barcelona.
Italia Gallery, Alicante.
- 2004** State Museum Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (Russia).
Nacional Museum of Poland, Królikarnia Palace, Warsaw (Poland).
EstiarTE Gallery, Madrid.
City Museum, Valencia.
Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
- 2003** Asturias Museum of Fine Arts, Oviedo.
MPA Gallery, Pamplona.
Exhibitions Lounge La Lonja, Alicante.
Casal Solleric, Palma de Mallorca.
Museum of Contemporary Art, Ibiza.
Pedro Peña Gallery, Marbella.
Fernando Silió Gallery, Santander.
Manuel Ojeda Gallery, Las Palmas of Great Canary.
- 2002** Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv (Israel).
Bach Quatre Contemporary Art, Barcelona.
Italia Gallery, Alicante.
- 2001** Rekalde Lounge, Bilbao.
EstiarTE Gallery, Madrid.
Dasto Center for the Arts, Oviedo.
Pablo Serrano Museum, Zaragoza.
Zaragoza Gráfica Gallery, Zaragoza.
Recoleta Cultural Center, Buenos Aires.
Museum-Theatre Givatayim, Tel Aviv (Israel).
- 2000** Extremaduran and Latin American Museum of Contemporary Art (MEIAC), Badajoz.
Architecture College, Málaga.
Bach Quatre Contemporary Art, Barcelona.
Artim Gallery, Strasbourg (France).
Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
Salvador Díaz Gallery, Madrid.
Bores & Mallo Gallery, Cáceres.
- 1998** Guy Crété Gallery, París (France).
Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
Wind Gallery, Soest (Netherlands).
Salvador Díaz Gallery, Madrid.
- 1997** Hugo de Pagano Gallery, New York.
- 1996** 57 Gallery, Madrid.
Zaragozano Bank Gallery, Zaragoza.
Orange Art Gallery, Milán (Italy).
- 1995** Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Stuttgart (Germany).
ARCO'95. Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Madrid.
NICAF'95. Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Yokohama (Japan).
Toshi Gallery, Tokio (Japan).
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).

- 1994 El Diente del Tiempo Gallery, Valencia.
FIAC'94. Adriana Schmidt Gallery, París (France).
Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Köln (Germany).
The Oidor Chapel. King's College Foundation, Alcalá de Henares.
- 1993 Almirante Gallery, Madrid.
Delpasaje Gallery, Valladolid.
Ad Hoc Gallery, Vigo.
Altzerri Gallery, San Sebastián.
Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Stuttgart (Germany).
- 1992 I.C.E. Munich (Germany).
Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Köln (Germany).
- 1991 Al.Hanax Gallery, Valencia.
Uno Gallery, Madrid.
Nicolás Salmerón C.C., Madrid.
- 1987 Imagen-Doce Gallery, Sevilla.
- 1984 La Ferrière Gallery, París (France).

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 THE ARMORY SHOW'11. Christopher Cutts Gallery, New York.
ART MADRID. Cordeiros Gallery, Madrid.
"Masters of Painting". Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
"Tribute to Vicente Aleixandre". Cervantes Institute, Rabat. Revellin Museum, Ceuta.
"Selected Works from the Cordeiros Gallery". Portuguese Stock Market, Lisbon (Portugal).
"FASHION ART". Tomás y Valiente Art Center, Fuenlabrada, Madrid.
- 2010 THE ARMORY SHOW'10. Christopher Cutts Gallery, New York.
ARCO'10. Ruinart Space, Madrid.
ART MADRID. Cordeiros Gallery, Madrid.
"Contemporary Painting". Museum da Alfândega, Porto (Portugal)
"I have a dream. International Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.". Matt Lamb Studios NBC Tower, Chicago.
Miramir Building, Sitges. Cristobal Gabarrón Foundation, Valladolid.
Cortijo Miraflores, Marbella. Hall of exhibition the Andorra Government (Andorra).
"100 years of the Association of Painters and Sculptors". House of the Currency, Madrid.
Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
"Tribute to Vicente Aleixandre". Cultural Center Generation of 27. Deputation of Málaga, Málaga. Casa Pintada Foundation, Mula, Murcia. Cervantes Institute, Tétouan (Morocco). Cervantes Institute, Casablanca (Morocco).
"AENA Collection of Contemporary Art". Art Center Tomás and Valiente, Fuenlabrada, Madrid.
"FASHION ART". Science Museum Prince Felipe. City of Arts and Sciences, Valencia.
MARB ART'10. Cordeiros Gallery, Marbella.
ESTAMPA'10. ArteInversión Space, Madrid.
TIAF'10. Begoña Malone Gallery, Toronto (Canada).
"Works on Paper". IVAM, Valencia
"Certain figuration 2". Casa de la Entrevista. Alcalá de Henares, Madrid.
SCOPE Miami. Begoña Malone Gallery, Miami.
- 2009 ART CHICAGO'09. Christopher Cutts Gallery, Chicago.
"X-Initiative". DIA Art Foundation, New York.
"I have a dream. International Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.". Gabarrón Foundation, Carriage House, New York.
Charles H. Wright Museum, Detroit. MLK, Jr. National Historic Site, Atlanta. Rosa Parks Museum, Montgomery.
National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis.
"Puro Art". Vigo Art Fair. Cordeiros Gallery, Vigo.

- ART MADRID. Cordeiros Gallery, ArteInversión Space y Antonio Prates Gallery, Madrid.
 “Calle Mayor”. Urban Exhibition Film Festival. Cáceres.
 “Homenaje a Vicente Aleixandre”. Sevilla City Hall, Sevilla. Cultural Space Caja Ávila, Las Navas del Marqués.
 Culture House, Miraflores de la Sierra, Madrid. City Museum, Madrid. Miramar Center, Sitges.
 Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
 FIART. Cordeiros Gallery, Valencia.
 TIAF’09. Christopher Cutts Gallery, Toronto (Canada).
 “Una cierta figuración”. Old Hospital of Santa María la Rica, Alcalá de Henares, Madrid.
 ESTAMPA’09. ArteInversión Space, Madrid.
 “AENA Collection of Contemporary Art”. Los Serrano Palace. Caja de Ávila Space, Ávila.
- 2008**
- ARCO’08. Ars Fundum Foundation, Madrid.
 ART MADRID. Cordeiros Gallery, Benlliure Gallery and Antonio Prates Gallery, Madrid.
 Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
 SCOPE New York’08. Begoña Malone Gallery, New York.
 ART CHICAGO’08. Christopher Cutts Gallery, Chicago.
 “Horizons”. III International biennial show of Contemporary Art (BIACS3). ARS FUNDUM Collection, Sevilla.
 “Cordeiros 2008/09 arte moderna e contemporânea”. Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
 FIART. Cordeiros Gallery, Valencia.
 “Language paper Collection CIRCA XX Pilar Citoler”. Fine Arts Circle, Madrid.
 Italia Gallery, Alicante.
 ESTAMPA’08. ArteInversión Space, Madrid.
 “Pintura contemporânea”. Cultural Center Ordem dos Médicos, Porto (Portugal).
 “XXI Century Masters. Graphic works”. Proyecto Arte Gallery, Madrid.
 “Modern and Contemporary”. Benlliure Gallery, Valencia.
- 2007**
- SCOPE New York’07. Begoña Malone Gallery, New York.
 ART MADRID. Benlliure Gallery and Antonio Prates Gallery, Madrid.
 “Aspace”. Fernando Silió Gallery, Santander.
 “Spanish and Portuguese painting”. Museu da Alfândega, Porto (Portugal).
 ART CHICAGO’07. Christopher Cutts Gallery, Chicago.
 ART DC’07. Annta Gallery, Washington DC.
 “Between Art II”. Revillagigedo Palace Cultural Center Cajastur, Gijón.
 Pedro Peña Gallery, Marbella.
 “Art and Health”. Santa María Hospital, Medical College, Lisbon (Portugal).
 TIAF’07. Begoña Malone Gallery, Toronto (Canada).
- 2006**
- ARCO’06. Moisés Pérez de Albeniz Gallery (MPA) and Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
 ART MADRID. Antonio Prates Gallery, Madrid.
 “Impressões Múltiplas. 20 Anos do CPS”. Museu da Água da Epal, Lisbon (Portugal).
 “AENA Art – Works on paper”. Sala Arquerías de Nuevos Ministerios. Ministry Building, Madrid.
 PAVILLION’06. Annta Gallery, New York.
 HPG Gallery, New York.
 SCOPE Hamptons’06. Cutts Malone Galleries. Long Island, New York.
 Bach Quatre Art Contemporani Gallery, Barcelona.
 “Art for sacred spaces”. Carlos de Amberes Foundation, Madrid.
 LISBON ART. Pedro Peña Gallery and Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 “33 Artists. Spanish Prints”. Zhu Qizhan Art Museum, Shanghai (China).
 ART.FAIR COLOGNE’06. Begoña Malone Gallery. Köln (Germany)
 TIAF’06. Begoña Malone Gallery. Toronto (Canada).
 “Stamps National Calcographie”. Rodríguez-Acosta Foundation, Granada.
 “Spanish and Portuguese painting”. Cordeiros Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
 “Only paper”. Begoña Malone Gallery, Madrid.
 “Tribute. Collection Miguel Logroño”. Eastern Market, Museum of Fine Arts of Santander and Fine Arts Circle, Madrid.
 Benlliure Gallery, Valencia.
 Prova do Artista Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 Christopher Cutts Gallery, Toronto (Canada).

- 2005 ARCO'05. Moisés Pérez de Albeniz Gallery (MPA), Estiarte Gallery and Bores & Mallo Gallery, Madrid.
 “Valdepeñas 65 years of Art. Fine Arts Awards (1940 – 2004)”. Provincial Museum, Ciudad Real.
 “Shadow and Light. Marifí Plazas Gal Collection”. Cervantes Institute, Berlin (Germany).
 FORO-SUR. Bores & Mallo Gallery, Cáceres.
 “Shadow and Light. Marifí Plazas Gal Collection”. Cervantes Institute, Brussels (Belgium).
 “From Big to Small, on Big”. Funds from de art collection of King's college Foundation.
 Forum des Arts & de la Culture, Talence (France).
 “Works on paper”. Benlliure Gallery, Valencia.
 “Photography”. Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
 “Shadow and Light. Colección Marifí Plazas Gal”. Cervantes Institute, New York.
 “Red”. Bennot Gallery, Knokke-Zoute (Belgium).
 Nueve Gallery, Valencia.
 “Shadow and Light. Marifí Plazas Gal Collection”. Cervantes Institute, Rome (Italy).
 “Abstract”. Bennot Gallery, Ostende (Belgium).
 VALENCIA-ART'05. Estiarte Gallery and Moisés Pérez de Albeniz Gallery (MPA), Valencia.
 “Visiones y sugerencias”. Sitges City Hall.
 CONTEST ART 8. Bennot Gallery, Ostende (Belgium).
 ESTAMPA'05. Pedro Peña Gallery, Antonio Prates Gallery (CPS) and Arte Inversión, Madrid.
 LINEART'05. Bennot Gallery, Gante (Belgium).
 “Abstract”. Bennot Gallery, Knokke-Zoute (Belgium).
 “Shadow and Light. Marifí Plazas Gal Collection”. Cervantes Institute, Vienna (Austria) .
 “Naturalezas del Presente”. Vostell Malpartida Museum, Cáceres.
- 2004 ARCO'04. Moisés Pérez de Albeniz Gallery (MPA), Estiarte Gallery, Bores & Mallo Gallery, Italia Gallery and Fernando Silió Gallery, Madrid.
 “Impurezas. El híbrido fotografía-pintura en el último arte español”. Sala Verónicas, Murcia.
 “Fragments. Art of the centuries XX al XXI”. Cultural Center of the town, Madrid.
 FORO-SUR. MPA Gallery and Bores & Mallo Gallery, Cáceres.
 “AENA Collection of Contemporary Art”. Navarra Museum, Pamplona.
 ART.FAIR COLONIA'04. Begoña Malone Gallery, Köln (Germany).
 “Fashion Art”. Cultural Center de las Condes, Santiago de Chile (Chile).
 “Fashion Art”. Museum of Modern Art, Bogotá (Colombia). Antioquia Museum, Medellín (Colombia).
 Museum of Modern Art LaTertulia, Cali (Colombia). Claustro de Santo Domingo, Cartagena de Indias (Colombia).
 TORONTO ART FAIR'04. Begoña Malone Gallery, Toronto (Canada)
 “Fashion Art”. National Museum San Carlos, México DF (Mexico).
 “Contemporánea Arte – Collection Pilar Citoler”. Amós Salvador Space, Logroño.
 “All about Berlin II”. White Box Kulturfabrik Museum, Munich (Germany).
 ART FRANKFURT'04. Begoña Malone Gallery, Frankfurt (Germany).
 Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 Metta Gallery, Madrid.
 KIAF'04. Begoña Malone Gallery, Seoul (South Korea).
 ESTAMPA'04. Antonio Prates Gallery (CPS), Madrid.
 “Valdepeñas 65 years of Art. Fine Arts Awards (1940 – 2004)”. Santa Cruz Museum, Toledo.
- 2003 ARCO'03. Museum of Contemporary Art Unión Fenosa, Metta Gallery, Estiarte Gallery, Bores & Mallo Gallery and Italia Gallery, Madrid.
 ART CHICAGO'03. Metta Gallery, Chicago.
 “X National Awards Engraving 1992-2002”. Spanish Contemporary Engraving Museum, Marbella.
 “Pinacoteca Iberdrola-UEx”. Rectorado de la Universidad de Extremadura, Cáceres.
 “En construcción–Funds Contemporary Art, City Hall of Vitoria-Gasteiz”. Montehermoso Palace, Vitoria.
 “III Triennial of Graphic Art”. City Museum, Madrid.
 “La cuerda de hilo”. Galerie im Hof der Backfabrik, Berlín (Germany).
 “Fusion”. AT Kearney, Madrid.
 “Itinerary”. Extremaduran and Latin American Museum of Contemporary Art (MEIAC), Badajoz.
 Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
 “Fashion Art”. National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires (Argentina).
 “Fashion Art”. Audiovisual Museum, Montevideo (Uruguay).

- “Art-Santander’03”. Fernando Silió Gallery, Santander.
 Pedro Peña Gallery, Marbella.
 Metta Gallery, Madrid.
 “AENA Collection Contemporary Art”. Museum of Fine Arts, Santander.
 Bach Quatre Contemporary Art, Barcelona.
 ESTAMPA’03. Antonio Prates Gallery (CPS), Madrid.
 ART LISBON. Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 “Fashion Art”. Visual Arts Museum, Montevideo (Uruguay).
- 2002 ARCO’02. Estiarte Gallery, Bores & Mallo Gallery and Salvador Díaz Gallery, Madrid.
 “Km. 0”. Kulturbrauerei, Berlín (Germany).
 “AENA Collection Contemporary Art”. Pablo Serrano Museum, Zaragoza.
 Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
 Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
 ART BRUSSELS’02. Bastien Gallery, Brussels (Belgium).
 “Markers II”. EAM. The International Artist’ Museum, Kassel (Germany).
 FORO-SUR. Bores & Mallo Gallery, Cáceres.
 “Beau Geste”. Michael Dunev Art Projects, Gerona.
 Corona Art Gallery, Hildrizhausen (Germany).
 Manuel Ojeda Gallery, Las Palmas of Great Canary.
 São Bento Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 “Moderne Schilderkunst”. Cervantes Institute, Brussels (Belgium).
 “Markers II”. APEX-METRO. The International Artist’ Museum, Edimburgo (England).
 Bach Quatre Arte Contemporáneo, Barcelona.
 “Copyright”. Metta Gallery, Madrid.
 FIAC’02. Metta, París (France).
 “Graphic Art Triennial”. Revillagigedo Palace, Gijón.
 “Matrix / Estampa”. Collection of Contemporary Graphic Art BBVA Foundation. Exhibition hall of the BBVA Foundation, Madrid.
 ESTAMPA’02. Antonio Prates Gallery (CPS), Madrid.
 LISBON ART. Bores & Mallo Gallery and Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
- 2001 ARCO’01. Estiarte Gallery and Bores & Mallo Gallery, Madrid.
 Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
 FORO-SUR. Bores & Mallo Gallery, Cáceres.
 “The night. Spanish Art 1984-2001”. Esteban Vicente Museum, Segovia.
 “Art and Architecture”. Traveling exhibition: Dasto Art Center, Oviedo, Casa Duró Art Center, Mieres and Barjola Museum, Gijón.
 Fall traveling exhibition Plasencia. Caja de Extremadura. City Museum, Madrid, Sevilla, Badajoz and Lisbon (Portugal).
 “20 years after” Palazzo de Monserrato Palce, Rome (Italy).
 “Propios y Extraños”. Galería Marlborough, Madrid.
 “Contemporary Art Collection Banco Zaragozano”. Fine Arts Circle, Madrid.
 Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
 ESTAMPA’01. Estiarte Gallery and Sen Gallery, Madrid.
 “Rome Encounter and Nostalgia”. Asamblea de Extremaduran, Mérida.
 Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
 PORTO ART. Antonio Prates Gallery, Porto (Portugal).
 LISBON ART. Antonio Prates Gallery and Bores & Mallo Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
 “Essence”. Sala Kubo. Kutxa art space, San Sebastián.
 “Print Makings by Spanish Artists”. Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran (Iran).
- 2000 ARCO’00. Salvador Díaz Gallery and Bores & Mallo Gallery, Madrid.
 ST’ART 2000. Artim Gallery, Strasbourg (France).
 “Fall Showrrom Painting - Caja de Extremadura”. Traveling exhibition by Extremaduran.
 Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).

- “Languages of the future“. Manuel Teixeira Gomes Museum, Portimão (Portugal).
HAF’00. Wind Gallery, La Haya (Netherlands).
“Juxtaposed images. Dialogue between abstraction and figuration“. BBVA Collection. Pablo Serrano Museum, Zaragoza.
“Art Collection of King’s College Foundation“. The Oidor Chapel, Alcalá de Henares.
“Contemporary Masters“. Blue Hill Cultural Center, New York.
“Juxtaposed images. Dialogue between abstraction and figuration“. BBVA Collection. Museum of Passion, Valladolid.
ESTAMPA’00. Antonio Prates Gallery (CPS), Madrid.
FAC’00. Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
“Multigrafias“. Dasto Gallery, Oviedo.
- 1999** ARCO’99. Salvador Díaz Gallery, Madrid.
“Contemporary Graphic“. Lekune Gallery, Pamplona.
Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
ART BRUSSELS’99. Athena Art Gallery, Brussels (Belgium).
Sharjah IV Biennial International, Pabellón de España, Sharjah (Arab Emirates).
“Painted Space“. Conde Duque C.C., Madrid.
“AENA Collection“. Municipal Museum, Málaga.
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
“AENA Collection Contemporary Art“. Marítima Station, La Coruña.
VI Mostra Unión Fenosa. Marítima Station, La Coruña.
Wind Gallery, Soest (Netherlands).
São Bento Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
“Dear Diego, Velázquez 400 years“. Alcorcón Culture House, Madrid.
“Banzo Zaragozano Contemporary Art Collection“. La Lonja, Zaragoza.
“Collection of graphic Works Zaragozano Bank“. Zaragozano Bank Gallery, Zaragoza.
FAC’99. Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
“Juxtaposed images. Dialogue between abstraction and figuration“. Argentaria Collection. Municipal Museum, Málaga.
- 1998** ARCO’98. Salvador Díaz Gallery and Antonio Prates Gallery, Madrid.
“5 X 5“ *Exhibition Commemorative the Caja Madrid competitions*. City Museum, Madrid. Caja Madrid Diagonal Sarriá, Barcelona. Federación de Empresarios de Comercio, Burgos. Museo de Santa Cruz, Toledo.
“Spanish Contemporary Graphic Art“. Cervantes Institute, Amman (Jordan).
ESTAMPA’98. Antonio Prates Gallery (CPS), Madrid.
Rayuela Gallery, Madrid.
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
Wind Gallery, Soest (Netherlands).
“II Graphic art triennial“. Palacio Revillagigedo, Gijón.
- 1997** ARCO’97. Estiarte Gallery and May Moré Gallery. Madrid.
Spanish Contemporary Engraving Museum, Marbella.
“Stamp Collection“. Contemporary Art Center Brussels, Brussels (Belgium).
II International Triennial of Graphic Art El Cairo. National Center for Fine Arts, Cairo (Egypt).
XXII International Biennial of graphic Art Ljubiana. Moderna Cankarjev Dom Gallery. Ljubiana (Slovenia).
“Stamp Collection“. Cervantes Institute, París (France).
Estiarte Gallery, Madrid.
“Art and Press“. Carlos de Amberes Foundation, Madrid.
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).
“SOLO“. City Museum, Madrid.
Salvador Díaz Gallery, Madrid.
Wind Gallery, Soest (Netherlands).
Clave Gallery, Murcia.
LINEART’97. Athena Art Gallery, Gante (Belgium).
ART MULTIPLE. Raquel Ponce Gallery, Düsseldorf (Germany).
FAC’97. Antonio Prates Gallery, Lisbon (Portugal).
- 1996** ARCO’96. AENA Foundation and May Moré Gallery, Madrid.
Athena Art Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).

	<p>“Liricos del Fin de Siglo. Abstract Paintings of the 90’s”. Spanish Museum of Contemporary Art. National Exhibition Center, Madrid.</p> <p>Foundation Showroom. Foundation Caja Vital Kutxa, Vitoria.</p> <p>Barceló Foundation, Palma de Mallorca.</p> <p>“Rome fellowship”. Spanish Academy, Rome (Italy).</p> <p>KUNST FAIR’96. Athena Art Gallery, Knokke (Belgium).</p> <p>Clave Gallery, Murcia.</p> <p>“Rome fellowship”. San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Madrid.</p> <p>ESTAMPA’96. Galería Estiarte. Madrid.</p> <p>“III Artistbook International 1996”. May Moré Gallery. Köln (Germany).</p> <p>VII Oviedo City Art Biennial. Museum of Fine Arts of Oviedo.</p>
1995	<p>El Diente del Tiempo Gallery, Valencia.</p> <p>Athena Gallery, Kortrijk (Belgium).</p> <p>“Again París”. Spanish College Grants. San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Madrid.</p> <p>Espace Médoquine, Talence (France).</p> <p>“Again París”. Spanish College Grants. Cervantes Institute, París (France).</p> <p>Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Köln (Germany).</p> <p>Spanish Contemporary Engraving Museum, Marbella.</p> <p>57 Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Stuttgart (Germany).</p> <p>Naito Gallery, Nagoya (Japan).</p>
1994	<p>ART MIAMI’94. Heller Gallery Gallery, Miami.</p> <p>57 Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Köln (Germany).</p> <p>“GESTURE AND ORDER”. Velázquez Palace. National Exhibition Center. Ministry of Culture, Madrid.</p> <p>V El Cairo Biennial, National Center for Fine Arts. Pabellón de España. El Cairo (Egypt).</p>
1993	<p>ARCO’93. Ad Hoc Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>SAGA’93. Adriana Schmidt Gallery, París (France).</p> <p>ART MULTIPLE. Adriana Schmidt Gallery, Düsseldorf (Germany).</p> <p>Delpasaje Gallery, Valladolid.</p> <p>Almirante Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>Adriana Schmidt Gallery, köln (Germany).</p>
1992	<p>ARCO’92. Galería Marie Louise Wirth Gallery, Zurich (Switzerland).</p> <p>GRAFIC ART’92. Adriana Schmidt Gallery and Diagonal Art Gallery, Barcelona.</p> <p>Seiquer Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>D’Kada Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>La Kábala Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>Obelisco Gallery, La Coruña.</p> <p>“International Grobe Kunstaussstellung”. Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf (Germany).</p>
1991	<p>Al.Hanax Gallery, Valencia.</p> <p>La Kábala Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>D’Kada Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>Uno Gallery, Madrid.</p>
1990	<p>Mustassaren Kulturitalolla, Vaasa (Finland).</p> <p>Buchwald Gallery, Frankfurt (Germany).</p> <p>Uno Gallery, Madrid.</p> <p>Buchwald Gallery, Frankfurt (Germany).</p>
1987	<p>Loupier C.C., Burdeos (France).</p> <p>Sanz-Enea Palace, Zarauz.</p>

1986 Galería The Living Art Gallery, Manchester (England).
Aline Newman Foundation, Brighton (England).
Century Gallery, London (England).

1984 Grand Palais, París (France).

PRIZES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

2009 Scholarship Extension Gonzalo Parrado Foundation, Madrid.

2008 Scholarship Gonzalo Parrado Foundation First Announcement, Madrid.

2002 National Engraving Award. Spanish Contemporary Engraving Museum (MGEC), Marbella. (First prize).
Scholarship from the Ministry of Culture and Science, Israel. Project for the Museum Givatayim. Tel Aviv (Israel).

1999 First Painting Award Nicomedes García GómezA Foundation, Segovia. (First prize).
VI Mostra Unión Fenosa, La Coruña. (Purchase Prize).
LX National Exhibition of Fine Arts Valdepeñas., Ciudad Real. (First prize – First medal of the exhibition).
II Art Biennial Rafael Botí. Córdoba. (Purchase Prize).
LXVI Fall Exhibition. Spanish Association of Painters and Sculptures, Madrid. (Special Award “Reina Sofía”).
XXI Fall Showroom, Plasencia. Caja de Extremadura, Plasencia. (Prize “Ortega Muñoz”).

1997 II International Triennial of Graphic Art El Cairo (Egypt). (International First Prize International Jury).
XIV National Painting Event. Azuqueca de Henares City Hall. Guadalajara. (First Prize).
XXIV National Event Caja de Madrid. Madrid. (Second Prize).
I Fall Showroom Painting. Royal Academy of Fine Arts Gallega. La Coruña. (Purchase Prize).
VI National Drawing Event Gregorio Prieto Foundation. Valdepeñas. Ciudad Real. (First Prize).
National Painting Prize IV Centennial Lawyers College Madrid. (First Prize).
V National Painting Event Iberdrola-UEX, Cáceres. (Purchase Prize).
I Mostra Biennial d’Art d’Alcoi. (Purchase Prize).

1995/96 Scholarship from Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Spanish Academy, Rome.

1994 Ministry of Culture Scholarship. Spain College, París.
El Cairo V Biennial (Egypt). (First Prize - Gold Medal International Jury).
XIII National Event “Alcorcón Town”, Madrid. (Purchase Prize).

1993 III International Painting Competition. Barceló Foundation. Palma de Mallorca. (Accésit – Purchase Prize).
Contemporary Plastic Vitoria-Gasteiz. Depósito de Aguas, Vitoria. (Purchase Prize).
XXIII Award Alcalá Town. Alcalá de Henares. (First Prize).

COLLECTIONS AND MUSEUMS

National Museum Reina Sofia Art Center (MNCARS), Madrid.
Valencian Institute of Modern Art (IVAM), Valencia.
Tretyakov Gallery State Museum, Moscow (Russia).
Albertina Museum, Vienna (Austria).
Extremaduran and Latin American Museum of Contemporary Art (MEIAC), Badajoz.
Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art, Madrid.
Museum-Theater Givatayim, Tel Aviv (Israel).
Fine Arts Museum of Asturias, Oviedo.
Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Es Baluard, Palma de Mallorca.
Museum of Contemporary Art Unión FENOSA (MACUF), La Coruña.
Spanish Contemporary Engraving Museum, Marbella.
International Museum of Graphic Art, El Cairo (Egypt).
Municipal Museum Valdepeñas, Ciudad Real.
Museum of Modern Art (MAMM), Medellín (Colombia).
Regional Museum of Modern Art (MURAM) Marifí Plazas Gal Collection, Cartagena.
Museo del Vidrio Santos Barosa, Marinha Grande (Portugal).
National Gallery, Kinsgton (Jamaica).
National Patrimony. Royal Palace, Madrid.
National Calcography, Madrid.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Madrid.
Chase Manhattan Bank, New York.
Foreign Office, Madrid.
Foreign Office, Manila (Philippines).
Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade, Madrid.
Spanish Academy, Rome (Italy)
City Hall Contemporary Art Collection, Madrid.
ADT Collection, Madrid.
AENA Collection, Alicante.
Art and Heritage Collection, Madrid.
City Hall Collection Ceutí, Murcia.
City Hall Collection Azuqueca, Guadalajara.
City Hall Collection Alcoi, Alicante.
City Hall Collection Vitoria-Gasteiz, Vitoria.
Zaragozano Bank Collection, Zaragoza.
Bank Português de Negócios Collection (BPN), Porto (Portugal).
Banesto Collection, Madrid.
Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo Collection, Alicante.
Caja de Extremadura Collection, Plasencia.
Comunidad de Madrid Collection, Madrid.
Caja Madrid Collection, Madrid.
Casino de Póvoa Collection, Póvoa de Varzim (Portugal).
Comunity Murcia Collection, General Management of Culture, Murcia.
IBERIA Collection, Madrid.
Marifí Plazas Gal Collection, Alicante y Cartagena.
Rheinhyp Rheinische Bank Collection, Madrid.
RENFE Collection, Madrid.
AENA Foundation, Madrid.
BBVA Foundation, Madrid.
College of Spain, París (France).
Lawyers College Madrid.

Provincial Deputation, Córdoba.
Provincial Deputation, La Coruña.
Provincial Deputation, Orense.
Actilibre Foundation, Madrid.
Armando Martins Foundation, Lisbon (Portugal).
King's College Foundation, Alcalá de Henares.
Barceló Foundation, Palma de Mallorca.
EAE Foundation, Barcelona.
Gonzalo Parrado Foundation, Madrid.
José Ortega y Gasset Foundation, Madrid.
Lorenzana Foundation, Madrid.
Nicomedes García Gómez Foundation, Segovia.
Telefónica Foundation, Madrid.
Govern of Castilla-León, Valladolid.
Municipal Museum, Alcorcón (Madrid).
Mustassaren Kulturitalolla, Vaasa (Finland).
Extremadura University, Cáceres.



Javier Remedios. View of Ciria's New York Studio. 2011.

La imprenta es un ejército de veintiséis soldados de plomo con el que se puede conquistar el mundo. Johann Gutenberg

Sun Tzu en El arte de la guerra nos enseña las estrategias necesarias para utilizar a la gente de la que dispone y afrontar su compromisos. Nosotros nos aliamos con comisarios, fotógrafos, historiadores, diseñadores, correctores, impresores, encuadernadores y artistas para dar forma a este volumen y conseguir que así quede preservada la memoria de la colección que contiene.

Impreso en abril de 2011, este catálogo ha sido maquetado en los campos de la localidad de Malpartida de Cáceres para pasar a la imprenta en Alcobendas.

La esmerada edición ha sido una tarea ardua en la que han intervenido medios humanos, analógicos y digitales y cuyo resultado tienes entre manos para que lo disfrutes.



