

GALLERIA POGGIALI

Esteban Ramón Pérez *Under Your Fate (Bet I'll Be Damned)*

04.04.2024 – 03.06.2024

Opening

Thursday April 4th, 2024 from 6.30 to 9:00 PM

Galleria Poggiali – Milano Foro Bonaparte 52 – 20121 Milano

Galleria Poggiali presents **Under Your Fate (Bet I'll Be Damned)**, the first solo exhibition of American artist Esteban Ramón Pérez (1989, Los Angeles), open to the public from April 4, 2024, at Foro Buonaparte 52, Milan.

Pérez's imagery is inhabited by elements drawn from his personal Chicano cultural heritage. In his work, biographical elements and social experiences blend with suggestions and iconographies from art history.

As the son of an upholstery shop owner, he grew up experimenting with the various properties of fabrics. His experience in the workshop strongly influences his work, characterized by the use of materials such as leather, velvet, feathers, and natural fibers. His artistic practice began with the recovery of scraps discarded by shops similar to his father's, tailoring shops, and textile industry outlets. In particular, leatherworking techniques, passed down for generations until they became an integral part of the cultural expression of the Mexican community, play a significant role in his production.

A patchwork of skins forms the basis of his works, sometimes stretched on artisanal frames, sometimes hung on the wall like tapestries. Their surface is crossed by iconographic collages that, engraved on the leather, evoke the aesthetics of Rasquachismo and the typical tattoos of Lowrider Culture.

With **Under Your Fate (Bet I'll Be Damned)**, Esteban Ramón Pérez presents a project composed of 9 unpublished works capable of shedding light on the connections between Chicano visual culture and the history of Italian art.

I began to investigate the painting and sculpture of the early and high Renaissance, around the time Christopher Columbus was accidentally stumbling upon the New World. I found a painting by Tommaso del Mazza of the Annunciation, with the angel bringing news to Mary of her pregnancy and its importance. I juxtaposed a figure of death, or a scythe behind the angel bringing bad news, as a symbol of foreboding of what is to come due to this divine intervention and the spread of Western religion and culture.

Chance Encounters (The Annunciation) (2024) explicitly recalls the Annunciation by the pre-Renaissance artist Fra Angelico, preserved in the convent of San Marco in Florence. Pérez reinterprets the scene by removing the figure of the Virgin and representing an armed Archangel Gabriel raising his hand to bless someone out of our field of vision.

Christian imagery returns in **Corona (Heavy Is the Head)** (2024), where a face resembling a tribal mask appears on the surface like a shroud, surrounded by a crown of thorns.

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I began to reflect on how colonial entities have instrumentalized religion and self-attribution of divine calling for the spread of Christianity worldwide, thus justifying wars and atrocities against non-believers, all fueled by a compulsion rooted in faith.

The continuous interplay of references between the two traditions culminates in the large-scale work titled ***The Blood of Christ on Their Hands (Nepantla)*** (2024). *Nepantla* is an ancient Nahuatl word meaning "in the middle." Some attribute the concept directly to the colonized Aztecs, others to the anthropologist Miguel Leon-Portilla (1926–2019) who was the first to write about it. In contemporary use, the term often refers to being between two cultures, particularly one's original culture and the dominant one. In this sense, *Nepantla* can be understood as a liminal and multicultural space, where multiple forms of reality are simultaneously seen and can become a tool for political change for those who consciously experience it.

The expression "Under Your Fate" - which gives the exhibition its name - evokes the idea of being "Under Your Spell" or "Under His watchful eye." This association inspired my reflection on the idea of fate as a consequence of a believer's conviction that it is God's predetermined will to make certain events happen in a specific way. I believe that this faith in fate can significantly influence the fate of someone else, especially those who do not share the same belief, considering it an element of misfortune.

Esteban Ramón Pérez lives and works in Los Angeles. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Pérez Art Museum Miami.

Opening: April 4th, 2024

Hours: From 6.30 PM

Place: Galleria Poggiali, Foro Buonaparte 52, Milano

For further information about the exhibition and the artist, please contact Galleria Poggiali Milano

info@galleriapoggiali.com

GALLERIA POGGIALI

Esteban Ramón Pérez

b. 1989, Los Angeles

Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

EDUCATION

2019

MFA Painting and Printmaking, Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT

2016

BFA, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA

SOLO & TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

2024

Under Your Fate (Bet I'll Be Damned), Galleria Poggiali, Milan, Italy

2023

Brown Noise, Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco, CA

2022

Distorted Myths, Washington & Lee University, Staniar Gallery, Lexington, VA

Sobre Las Olas, Charles Moffett Gallery, New York, NY

2021

Eagle and Serpent, Calderón Ruiz Gallery, New York, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023

Made In LA: Acts of Living, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA

Permanent Collection, Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL

Memory Work, Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

2023

Refined Reflections into the Formidable, University of Texas, R.H.R. Galleries, San Antonio, TX

The Horses Stood Like Men, Jenkins Johnson Projects, Brooklyn, NY

PhillipsX and Artadia, Phillips, Los Angeles, CA

2022

Hot Concrete: LA to HK, K11 Musea, Hong Kong, China

House Parté II: The Final Salé, 1883 E Alejo, Palm Springs, CA

Eyes of the Skin, Lehmann Maupin, New York, NY

Doing Our Own Thing, Japanese American Cultural Community Center, Los Angeles, CA

Aqux, The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, CA

In Spite of Modernism: Contemporary Art, Abstract Legacies, and Identity, Arlington Arts Center, Arlington, VA

2021

Hasta Que La Muerte Nos Separe, Gamma Galeria, Guadalajara, Mexico

NXTHVN: Un/Common Proximity, James Cohan Gallery, New York, NY

What's It All About, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

Patchwork, Transmitter Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

2020

The Future is LATINX, Eastern Connecticut State University Art Gallery, Windham, CT

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA

Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL