

*The Moisés Pérez de Albéniz gallery opens a new season with the first solo- exhibition of the artist **Santiago Giralda (Madrid, 1980)**. Titled *Let the Shadow Be*, the exhibition explores the notion of shadow in landscape painting at a constructive and symbolic level.*

*In portraying his landscapes, the artist reflects on shadows as being an unattainable wish. This obstacle prompts him to rethink his art. He is interested in his path from the digital context of mass media to carving out a niche for himself through painting. Likewise, he finds similarities between the practice of painting, the shadow that engendered painting in Plato's allegory of the cave and the symbols of the subconscious, world where the painting is let be. As Balthus noted: "to paint means to reach, to proceed, and to conquer". Transcend the secrets, translate what is still in the dark, do not try to make interpretations. The painter is not responsible for translating; his willingness to express the world through darkness is enough.*

*The exhibition is organized as a kind of trip, such that, canvases of various formats are spread out through the gallery to display the nuances and panoramas of Giralda's mental landscape. Working from a digital deconstruction of mountains, glaciers and jungles, he accepts a correlation between the symbolic effect of conquering the unknown and the process of painting in itself. It is noteworthy that the paint is unusually superposed, meaning that different representation systems with assorted pictorial processes merge to emphasise the temporal and physical dimension of the image. Scales, perspectives and lights cease to be subtly coordinated to shift focus to other features such as surfaces, textures and materials –that which can escape the purely visual. Here, Santiago Giralda calls upon his ghosts, the object no longer projects its shadow, it is in the process of exploration, where the artist leaves traces of his meditations and acts, of his agenda and errs.*

Raul Hidalgo

Santiago Giralda's project envisions the contribution of painting in the technological context and mediated by contemporary society. His proposal starts from a dialogue established between the painting traditions and new technologies related to the representation and contemplation of a world that seems gradually more digitalized. His work proposes to project a space to reflect through painting on the different ways to interact with the environment.

Giralda explores the notion of landscape as a cultural construct currently created through the use of media images. His paintings evoke imaginary and dreamy landscapes designed through preexisting images of concrete locations. Thus, he draws a parallel between paradigmatic landscapes such as mountains, glaciers or jungles, as iconographic symbols of the conquest of the unknown and the process of making a painting. Just as explorers traversing a long road to reach a personal goal imposed upon nature, the artist faces the canvas as a process through which he must accept uncertainty in order to conquer accidents and discover new realities. Somehow, both experiences emerge from his will to express the world through its obscurity. A romantic look revealing an individual stance in the face of the rapidity and confusion imposed by the knowledge society.

Giralda edits media images through digital techniques to finally paint them. The manner in which he faces his work is based on an interest in exploring the studio experience that surrounds the practice of

painting. When he paints, he aims to provide the images with the experience, temporality, carnality and history of painting. Without intending to directly duplicate the original images, he uses them as structures to support the pictorial space. Furthermore, he applies paint in such different manners as to produce an eclectic surface that will emphasise the temporal and physical dimension of the pictorial image.

Santiago Giralda lives and works in Madrid. With a degree in Fine Art and a PhD in Art, Creation and Research from the Complutense University of Madrid, he also completed a postgraduate course at Hochschule für bildende Künste, in Hamburg. He has received numerous awards at various events and competitions, most recently the Caja Madrid Generación Award (2013) and Circuito de Artes Plásticas of the Community of Madrid. He has also participated in group exhibitions including *La construcción social del paisaje* at the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo (2015), *2014/Antes de irse. 40 ideas sobre pintura*, curated by David Barro at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de La Coruña and *Presente Continuo* at the Centro de Arte Conde Duque de Madrid (2013). His work can be found in diverse private and public art collections, including those of the Spanish Ministry of Culture, Banco Santander, DKV and Caja Madrid. Finally, his paintings have been shown at contemporary art fairs such as Arco (2014, 2015), Estampa (2014), Arte Santander (2014) and Expo Chicago (2013).