

CINTA VIDAL

VIEWPOINTS

September 15, 2018 - October 6, 2018

(Los Angeles, CA) - Thinkspace is pleased to present *Viewpoints*, the gallery's second solo presentation of works by Barcelona-based painter Cinta Vidal. Trained professionally at the *Taller de Escenografia Castells Planas* in St. Agnès de Malanyanes as a scenographer to create larger than life-sized theatrical backdrops for opera and dance, Vidal has balanced an apprenticed theater trade, work as a freelance illustrator, and her independent output as a muralist and fine artist. Her highly detailed paintings stage a surreal simultaneity in which multiple vantage points intersect, unfettered by gravitational laws. These fractured landscapes and architectures represent a multiplicity of experience, as Vidal hopes to convey the endless variations and relativisms of subjectivity. Her imaginative and dizzyingly fractured works remind us of the feeling of existential disconnect when faced with the incongruity of our inner and outer worlds.

Vidal has always pursued her own work alongside her other professional art ventures, the technical demands of her scenography and illustration work shaping the aesthetic resolve and fastidious execution of her personal output. Her ongoing series of gravity-defying forays into physical and metaphorical space began in 2013. She has since continued to refine and perfect the direction of this fragmented world of spatial free fall, increasing the level of detail and realism in each piece. This unexpected fusion of chaos and control, in which the laws of physics are no longer absolute but the exaction of realistic rendering, perspectives, and shading, is no less meticulous, compels the viewer to consider the inherent heterogeneity of personal perspective. Vidal eschews abstraction in favor of relatable objects and identifiable spaces to explore this feeling of strange familiarity in a universally accessible way.

The artist's paintings have evolved from a practice primarily based in drawing. This illustrative aesthetic is evident in even her most hyper-realistically rendered painted works, anchoring them visually in a graphic confidence. Her deconstruction of daily spaces ranges from the more architectural and at times abstractedly geometric to the organic and nondescript. Her figurative subjects are anonymous and random, but the personal finds expression through the artist's choice of objects and *mise-en-scène*; often pieces from her own memories and life, like the mid-century modern furniture belonging to her grandparents.

In *Viewpoints*, Vidal offers her patented spatial and experiential synchronicity in the creation of worlds that feel both united and estranged in their divided closeness. Just as in real life, several versions of the same moment coexist imperceptibly to the subjects, as they themselves are caught in the confines of their singularity. Working primarily in acrylic on panel, Vidal combines seeming contradictions in a concurrence of extremes. Structurally and symbolically, she reorganizes elements of the known and every day into jarring disarticulations of conventional structures and places in a single frame. This has manifest in the past as more specific themes, such as the environmental impact of industry and the coexistence of multiple cultures and histories.

Thematically, this work emerges from the impossibility of ever fully understanding the "other's" experience; this is the fundamental metaphor that governs Vidal's visual empathy. Envisioning our diversity as a positive divergence that can lead at times to common and shared experience, a brief respite of cohesion in an otherwise endlessly divided world, Vidal reminds us of the endless potential of altering our vantage points.

BENJAMIN GARCIA

PANACEA

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Concurrently on view in the Thinkspace Project Room is *Panacea*, featuring new works by Venezuelan artist Benjamin Garcia. Fascinated by the psychological fracture of the individual and the competing impulses at work in any single identity, Garcia's painterly style is emotive and gestural.

His works reveal the figurative subject in a state of transformation or becoming. These are discrete moments of revelation expressed in the shifting and itinerant quality of the artist's paint application, dynamic psychological portraits mitigated by the gestural viscosity of the media. The coexistence of distress and beauty shape Garcia's works with an undeniable pathos; the "Panacea" in this case appears to be the healing work of paint itself, and the emotive and universalizing outlet it provides in a time of factious disorder.

Inspired by great illustrators like Jean Giraud, aka. Moebius and Bill Sienkiewicz of Marvel Comics' fame, the corpulent, fleshy contemporary figurative painting of Jenny Saville, the illustrations and graphic novels of Kent Williams, and the darkly works of preeminent portraitist Lucian Freud, Garcia's inspiration comes from all visual domains, from both "high" and populist expressions of figuration.

Combining moments of chaos in his work with the tempered control of composition, Garcia slides in and out of affective extremes. At one side, governed by impulses of ecstatic joy and sensuality, and on the other, foiled by the spectrum's opposing impulses of anxiety and violence. The coexistence of these oppositions, articulated in the representation of the body as a tangible vehicle for the psyche, feel both relatable and seductive, beautifully powerful and inexplicably unhinged.