

Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem (MMKA)



Panoramic view at Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem (MMKA)

Left: Pablo Alonso.

Right: Ignacio Goitia.

Courtesy Marc Plum Fotografie/MMKA.

The End of History...and The Return of History Painting

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29 January–8 May 2011 Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem (MMKA) The Netherlands www.mmkaarnhem.nl
24 June–30 October 2011 Domus Artium (DA2), Salamanca Spain




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The Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem (MMKA) presents the exhibition *The End of History...and The Return of History Painting*. Curated by Paco Barragán, the exhibition is structured around 4 parts: Part 1: *The Return of Religion*; Part 2: *Theater of Fear*; Part 3: *War on Terror and Protest*; and Part 4: *The End of Truth and the Rise of Storytelling*. The exhibition includes works by Miguel Aguirre (Peru), Pablo Alonso (Spain/Germany), Matthias Köster (Germany), Ignacio Goitia (Spain), Ronald Ophuis (The Netherlands), Pedro Barbeito (USA), Maryam Najd (Iran/Belgium), Nicola Verlato (Italy), Trevor Guthrie (Canada), Simeón Saiz (Spain), Pascal Danz (Switzerland), Gamaliel Rodríguez (Puerto Rico), Carlos Salazar (Colombia), Sandra Gamarra (Peru), Iñaki Gracenea (Spain), and Judy Sirks (Norway) **The End of History** *The End of History...and the Return of History Painting* references a long line of theories on "Ends of History" by thinkers such as Hegel, Kojève and Fukuyama. In Fukuyama's thesis "The End of History", 1989, he proclaimed the end of all ideological evolution and the world-wide triumph of liberal democracy. Departing from his thesis this exhibition analyzes the return of painting as both a consequence of a more conservative zeitgeist and as a response to historical events like September 11. Within this painting 'revival' there's a return among a group of artists, engaged in a critical analysis of today's society, to a kind of 'anti-history painting'. The artwork in *The End of History...and The Return of History Painting* reflects on the relationship between painting and our historical moment as well as investigating paintings' relationship to photography, video and television—the media that usurped its role as documenter of history. **The Return of (Anti-)History Painting** For centuries history painting had been one of the most important pictorial genres. With the invention of the camera and its ability to quickly produce and distribute more reliable and less subjective forms of documentation it is quite comprehensible that history painting practically disappeared until today. Artists are now reclaiming the genre creating a kind of 'anti-history' painting in which it's not about melodramatic and idealized compositions at the service of a national conscience, glorification of the past or certain heroes, but a critical analysis of relevant, recent political or historical events: from the War in the Balkans, Iraq, to the terrorist attacks in New York and Madrid, Guantanamo, the guerrilla in Colombia, Islamic and Christian fundamentalism, the war on terror, and the fallacies of 'neo-con' capitalism. **Painting and Mass Media: Slowness and Acceleration** Today's information and mass media society have brought about a diffused 'aestheticization' where artists are mixing political and war images with those proceeding from ads, commercial cinema and entertainment. Be it by hiding images behind layers, making them transparent or pixelated, applying faded colors and thick paint, there is a slowing down of the experience of viewing an image through a hand made, physical rendering. But, besides this 'slowness' and physicality that we traditionally associate with painting, the painting medium is also paradoxically going through an 'acceleration' process through its newfound relationship with iPhones, scanners, Photoshop, Facebook, satellites, digital cameras, and 3-D programs. The artists portrayed in *The End of History...and The Return of History Painting* show that painting as a medium offers renewed possibilities and is able to provide an alternative and critical reading of contemporary history while it engages with its own technological and mass-media context. The exhibition will tour to the Domus Artium (DA2) Contemporary Art Center in Salamanca, Spain. There will be additional works included by Fabián Marcaccio (Argentina/USA), Alexis Esquivel (Cuba) and Diego Vallejo (Spain). **Exhibition Information** *The End of History...and the Return of History Painting*, 29 January–8 May 2011, Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem (MMKA), Arnhem, The Netherlands; Domus Artium (DA2) Salamanca, Spain, 24 June – 30 October 2011. For further press information please contact Linda Schregardus at Linda.schregardus@arnhem.nl; www.mmka.nl