

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VALENTINA LIERNUR: JURO QUE



25 JUNE – 7 AUGUST 2021
PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY 24 JUNE 2021, 6-8PM
SIMON LEE GALLERY, HONG KONG

'Liernur is something like a contemporary flâneuse, carefully observing women [in her work]. Motivated by the pleasure that comes with concealing one's identity as a painter, Liernur's observational processes become both sly and sneaky' – Ana Vogelfang, *Texte Zur Kunst*.

Simon Lee Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by the Argentinian artist Valentina Liernur. The exhibition is the artist's debut show with the gallery and marks the first time her work has been presented in Asia.

Liernur's practice is rooted in an ongoing exploration of the ways in which material can be rendered in the pursuit of painting. Often working in groups of work defined by a single medium, Liernur considers the physical qualities and mark-making capacity of oil paint on canvas in the same way she engages with less conventional materials such as denim and gabardine in other series. Shifting between abstraction and figuration, and often encouraging tensions and slippages to emerge between these modes of painting, Liernur seeks to manipulate and enhance the materiality of her chosen medium, embedding each work with a distinct, visceral quality.

For her exhibition in Hong Kong, Liernur presents a series of new paintings that continue her interest in recent years of depicting female figures in everyday scenarios. Liernur's observations are based on photographs of friends, family and strangers taken in various settings including domestic spaces, public transport and city streets. Although not conceived as such, the works together form a loose sequence that the artist refers to as an account of a stroll through an urban environment. Liernur often takes the photographs that inform her paintings surreptitiously, resulting in works that capture fleeting moments that have an abrupt, confrontational and, at times, voyeuristic dynamic between the figures in the painting and the standpoint occupied by Liernur and subsequently the viewer. This awkward interaction is heightened by the prominence of sunglasses worn by many of Liernur's subjects and the way their faces are often obscured by shadows, denying the viewer any sense of connecting and identifying with the women and girls that occupy Liernur's works.

While the paintings in the show borrow from the language of figuration and portraiture, for Liernur the true subject of her work is the paint she uses rather than the image she creates. Liernur works intensively on each canvas, building multiple layers that shift between rough, spontaneous brushstrokes and slow, carefully executed details. Thinking of paint as information, Liernur likens her method of painting to the impulsive process of capturing thoughts in written form and the consequent, more methodical act of editing.

Liernur's use of colour defines her work and the way the viewer experiences it. Despite starting each work from a photograph, Liernur's choices in executing the work are more akin to the effects used in post production. In some works, flashes of lurid and luminous colours make a jolting appearance in an otherwise dark and muted palette. Elsewhere, paintings have a solarised quality or are rendered almost entirely in evocative hues of pinks and reds. Liernur's paintings take on a dream-like quality, capturing fleeting moments in paint that speak to the experience of being deep in thought and glimpsing a sudden, incomplete aspect of reality.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Valentina Liernur

Valentina Liernur was born in 1978 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she lives and works. She studied between Beca Kuitca, Buenos Aires, Argentina and Städelschule, Frankfurt, Germany; and in 2013 completed the Artist in Residency program with FAAP, São Paulo, Brazil. Liernur's work has been shown internationally and has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions including *Scarlata*, Ruth Benzacar Galería de Arte, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2019); *Sumisión*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, NY (2016); *MEGA POR NO*, Colmegna Spa, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2015); *Ahhhhhhh*, Campoli Presti, Paris, France (2015); *Ahh...Ah...*, Campoli Presti, London, UK (2014); *Corruzione*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, NY (2014) and *Fiebre*, Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2010). Group exhibitions include *four corners of the landscape*, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA (2020); *Call Giovanni*, Revolver Galeria, Lima, Peru (2019); *The Vitalist Economy of Painting*, Galerie Neu, Berlin, Germany (2018); *Theft Is Vision*, LUMA Westbau, Zurich, Switzerland (2017); *United States of Latin America*, Museum of Contemporary Art of Detroit, MI (2015); *Faux Amis*, Simon Lee Gallery, London, UK (2015); *Seven Reeds*, Overduin & Co., Los Angeles, CA (2014); *Broken Windows*, New York Gallery, New York, NY (2013) and *FSPC*, Formalist Sidewalk Poetry Club, Miami, FL (2012).

About Simon Lee Gallery

Founded in London in 2002, Simon Lee Gallery represents artists of diverse generations whose practices explore a wide range of media, from sculpture and painting to video and photography, and who share a broad interest in an exploration of the conceptual. Aiming to provide a significant international audience for its artists, the gallery also regularly punctuates its programme with historical exhibitions and curated group shows, which present shifts in contemporary art practice and thought, whilst broadening the dialogue with artists outside of the gallery's core programme. In addition to its UK activity, in 2012 the gallery opened a space in Hong Kong, which introduced its artists to a wider public in Asia, with a fully independent programme.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @SimonLeeGallery

www.simonleegallery.com

Image: **Valentina Liernur**, *Señora rosa y perro*, 2021 . Oil on canvas , 167 x 125 cm (65 3/4 x 49 1/4 in.) Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery. Photo: Santiago Ortí.

For further press information, images and requests please contact Zoe Gorell: zoe@simonleegallery.com / +44 (0) 207 491 0100.