

MAI 36 GALERIE

Michel Pérez Pollo *UQBAR*

Opening: **Thursday, September 7, 2017, 6 p.m.**
Duration of exhibition: **September 8 through October 28, 2017**
Opening hours: **Tues-Fri 11 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., Sat 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Mai 36 Galerie is delighted to present the works of Cuban painter Michel Pérez Pollo. The gallery hosted his first solo exhibition in 2014, following on from his inclusion in a 2012 group show featuring fellow artists Flavio Garcíandía and Raúl Cordero.

Michel Pérez Pollo (*1981 in Manzanillo/Cuba, lives and works in Havana) creates his works in two stages: first, he makes a model of clay and found objects, which serves as a template for his painting in the second stage. Pérez Pollo always works on two levels: a painted area in the lower third of the picture acts as a base for the seemingly three-dimensional form in the foreground. The resulting figurative situations and sculptural portraits have a surreal and poetic effect.

The title *UQBAR*, chosen to highlight this exhibition at Mai 36 Galerie, refers to a short story by the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges: „Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius“, in which the author describes an imaginary place, planet or land by the name of Uqbar - a place of mountains and rivers, with its own laws, literature, philosophy and so on. The boundaries between the fictitious world of Uqbar and the real world become blurred in the course of the story, to the point at which no distinction can be made between reality and fiction.

This notion that the world may be made up of a mental matrix is grasped by Michel Pérez Pollo and introduced into his works. The idea consists first and foremost in the mind of the artist and takes on real form in the course of the creative process. For Pérez Pollo, the question of reality is key to the history of painting and its portrayal. This is echoed in his paintings, which imply not only a questioning of material reality, but also a quest to turn thoughts into reality. In this way, the art of Pérez Pollo constructs an imaginary world that exists autonomously.

This aspect of his approach is particularly evident in his latest series works, in which he explores the tradition of portraiture. Using fragments of statues or objects in order to avoid subjectivity and preclude recognition, he abstracts forms from portraits, taking them to another level in a new and distinctive form of portrait painting.

Michel Pérez Pollo studied at the Escuela Profesional De Artes Plásticas in Holguín and at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana. His works have been shown internationally, and can be seen, for example, from September onwards, in the group exhibition *Kunst x Kuba – Zeitgenössische Positionen seit 1989* at the Ludwig Forum in Aachen.

The opening will take place on Thursday, September 7, 2017, 6 p.m. Michel Pérez Pollo will be present.

Visual materials are available on request. (office@mai36.com).

We look forward to seeing you at the gallery and thank you for your interest.

Mai 36 Galerie
Victor Gisler

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