

RL Fine Arts: Contemporary art project

Victor Rodriguez

Chat Noir

Exhibition curated with Alberto Barral

Exhibition:

March 21 to April 30, 2012

Opening reception:

Wednesday March 21 6:30 to 8:30pm



Victor Rodriguez, *Chat Noir 6 (Smile)*, 2012, 58 x 78 inches, acrylic on canvas

RL Fine Arts Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Victor Rodriguez, a Mexican artist based in New York. Taking his cue from two iconic paintings by the Nineteenth century French artist, Edouard Manet, Victor continues to ruminate on Manet's influential ability to look.

Manet's great genius was in the ability to dispassionately look at modern life and present it in painting, often in relation to the great tradition of art history. His iconic masterworks, *Olympia* (1863) and the *Bar at the Folies-Bergere* (1882), continue to excite discussion to this day. *Olympia*, an obvious depiction of a courtesan, shocked Paris in 1865, and the *Bar at the Folies Bergeres*, a cool observation of the empty space at the heart of the bustling metropolis, where people seek fleeting connections, are as modern today as they were 150 years ago.

In the continuing discussion of photography versus painting, that has preoccupied the art world since photography began documenting our world, supposedly replacing the ability of painting to do the same, Victor's art sits in the crossroads. Using the camera to look he continues the journey onto the canvas, exploring the many sublime abilities of painting to compete with photography.

His modern *Olympia* is playing the role to her famous predecessor, and in his large, graphic paintings, Victor allows us to think about how the camera permits us all to play roles. An immense supply of images supposedly of real moments are actually taking us farther and farther away from reality, as these snap shots stand in for reality. A moment is forever captive on a flat piece of paper with emulsion, or more pertinently these days, on a digital image for everyone to see. As his modern muse smiles back at us in front of Manet's *Bar at the Folies Bergeres*, she looks at us in 3D glasses and laughs. Who is really looking at who?

In a culture obsessed with being looked at and looking, Victor Rodriguez, explores the art of observation and the belief in the power and ability of painting to convey the real...or is it real?

Victor Rodriguez:

Born: Mexico City, 1970

Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

For more information and visuals please contact Peter Louis at RL Fine Arts.

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