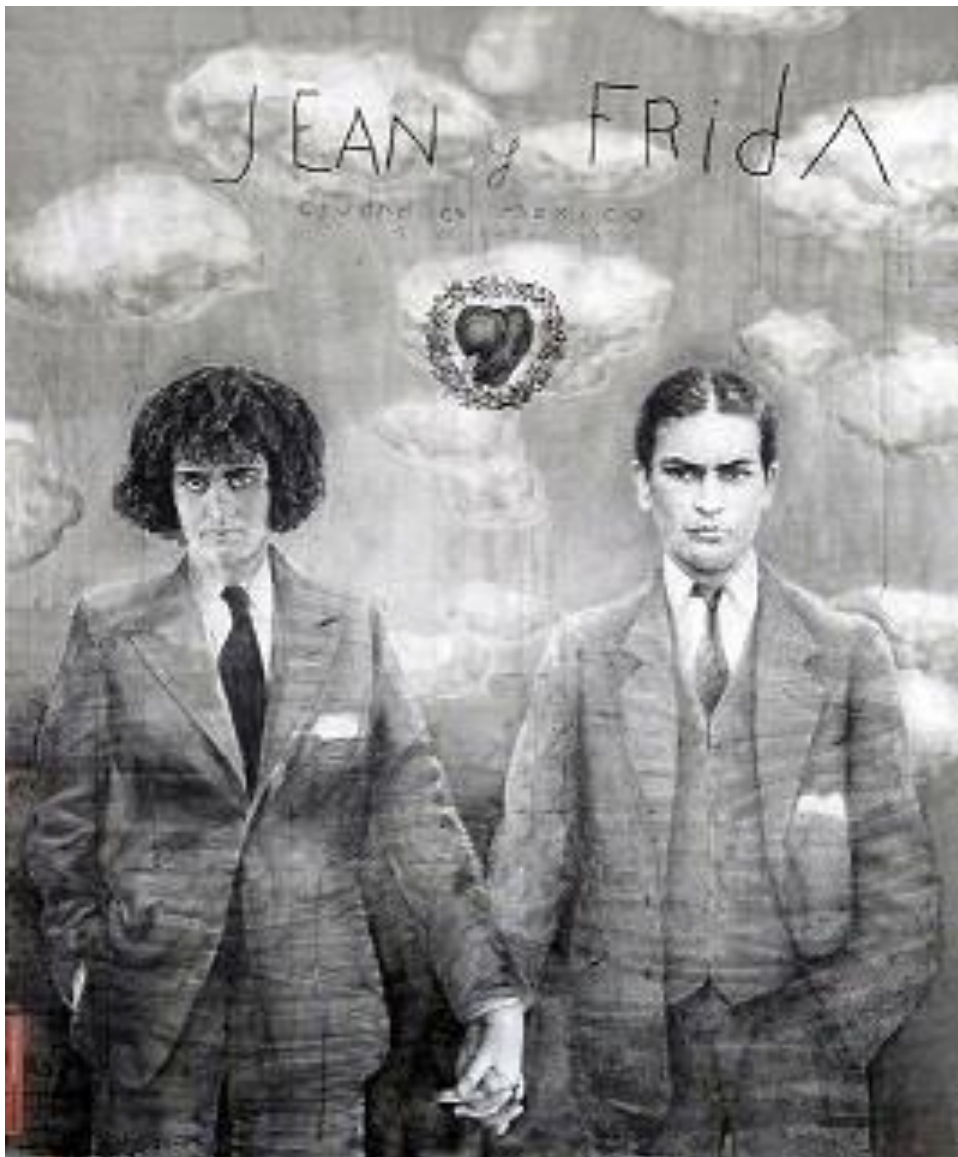


PRESS RELEASE

EDUARDO GRUBER. *The Room of Mirrors*



Eduardo Gruber. *Jean Wilson*. From the series *Femme fatale-amores platónicos*, 2018. Watercolor, charcoal on paper, 179 x 149 cm

27 September 2019 – 2 February 2020

MARCO, 1st floor perimetral exhibition halls

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday (inc. holidays) from 11am to 2:30pm and from 5pm to 9pm. Sunday from 11am to 2:30pm

Produced by: MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

Curated by: Miguel Fernández-Cid

OVERVIEW

Beginning September 27, the MARCO resumes an exhibition program which showcases two solo exhibitions — Jorge Martins and Eduardo Gruber — in the first-floor exhibition halls. Both proposals have work on paper as their leitmotiv, notwithstanding they are quite different in aesthetics and works: Gruber's story along with Martin's poetic voice.

Eduardo Gruber (Santander, 1949) is a painter who has always been persuaded by drawing and work on paper, not just as sketches but as a final work. Multifaceted artist, he has created sculptures, interventions, installations, set designs (i. e. opera for Pilar Miró), and has published several novels.

The exhibition at MARCO brings a selection of his most recent works together —drawings and work on paper— in which the presence of the word, the narrative and the literature are crucial. Special mention deserves the relationship between literature, thought and image, so essential in his work as his passion for the metaphor. Chance is the storyline which sets subtle limits, a mirror which once trespassed, let one live another life, inhabit another stage. A selection of pieces in the form of a tiny room for affirmations, echoes and reflections, which allows the visitor to have a scent of the way of work of an artist who, through painting, is always in search for the total work of art.

+ INFO at <http://www.marcovigo.com/es/actuais>

A WORD BY THE CURATOR

Drawing, graphite, paper. The idea and process in Eduardo Gruber

“It is possible to classify drawings according to the intent and intention that guides them. Drawings done by architects are unmistakable because they indicate a place and highlight lines that encapsulate volumes, real or imagined architectures. Drawings done by sculptors focus on an interest, or on a condition: weight, strength, volume; or in its absence: lightness, synthesis, hollow. In drawings done by painters, we can see an idea emerging in the form of sketches or outlines.

The drawings done by Eduardo Gruber (Santander, 1949) are special because they encompass the whole work process. They start with a motive, often borrowed but appropriated, and the piece of art then unfolds and develops from this motive. He draws, writes, adds and subtracts, in search of the ideal scale. Only when using watercolours does he proceed in a light and precise manner, clean and accurate. He is always daring and agile, transporting the spectator to this desired image that contains quests and tracks. Many of his drawings express a cinematographic rhythm or resemble intense short stories or long fictionalized sagas. Sometimes his pieces are small, but occasionally he produces murals, in any case, his pieces are always enigmatic, mysterious, confessional, subtle.

The Room of Mirrors brings together his recent works on paper, in these pieces line, text and graphical symbols coexist. The exhibition starts with a reflection on chance, this fine mirror that separates or unites reality and fantasy, violence and tranquility. Just like in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*. A book of books unfolds, the result of noting down those books from his library, with an apparent and sincere carelessness; passionate portraits of writers, a subtle yet evocative story of shadows, and a strange exquisite *cadaver*. Next to these, you will find a magical mural, just in case you may have been led to believe that drawing was a fleeting or temporary occupation, or one that is done at intervals.

The exhibition ends with a series called *Femme Fatal*, in which Gruber uses police files, which he came across almost by chance, to update portraits and hint at new lives, by going through the mirror of reality. There is a lot of Carroll, an inventor of stories, and even a romantic fabulist in this work. Perhaps that is why the exhibition opens with a swan taking flight, on the verge of being devoured, being shot at by alpaca cutlery. ‘Twist the neck of the deceptive swan / whose white in the fountain seems unreal’ wrote the poet, but that is a whole other story, and perhaps, a whole other exhibition.”

Miguel Fernández-Cid

Exhibition curator

A WORD BY THE ARTIST

LUCK AND CHANCE. An approach to the Femme fatal-platonic loves project

“Do not ask a philosopher about luck, they will not answer you, perhaps, however they will answer you if you ask them about something that we tend to identify it with: chance. They will give you the example of the plant pot that falls into your path. Aristoteles talked about chance, referring to it as an inscrutable part of human existence, relating it to relevant or accidental aspects that occur in our day-to-day lives.

However, chance is not as popular as luck. Good or bad luck is ever present in our day-to-day vocabulary, and it can often be used to explain our journeys in life or even to give opinions, without hesitation, about things that happen to *others*. Perhaps luck is somehow related to a type of personal assessment of our own existence, with the belief that the circumstances which have provoked this luck will have appeared as if gifted, contributing in this way to our happiness, or why not, our misfortune. Here the question lies in whether luck can be found in what one has, or in what one desires.

When looking for a way to explain this mystery, a link of the internet brought me to a page called “femme-fatal”, and on this page, I discovered the “Justice & Police Museum”, which was related to Sydney’s history. There I found images from the nineteen-twenties archives in a folder named “women prisoner”. There were dozens of police reports in which the faces of women of all ages, which had been photographed with a disturbing and heart-breaking clarity, were accompanied by a brief text, their police report, which told of their crime. These images sparked an interest within me, resulting in something that I like to define as a platonic love for each of them, and I felt compelled to tell their “other” story. Rather than just inventing a simple fictional story, I decided to imagine what their lives would have been like, if only they had come across some “good luck”. I did not want the single photographs taken of their faces at that exact moment to become the only evidence of their passage through the incredible anonymous experience that every single human being has contributed to in their journey through our history.

Femme fatale-platonic loves is a series of nine 180x150cm pieces produced on paper, using a mixture of techniques (watercolours, charcoal, graphite and collage). In this project, my work as an artist and my work as the “hidden” writer come together. Nine short stories accompany each of the pieces in an indivisible manner to create this complete display. When producing this collection, there were two factors that I decided not to modify in any way order to ensure that story was conceptually related to the germinal idea; the name and the photograph of each of their faces. Mary Harris, Eileen O’Connor, Jean Wilson, Alice Clarke, Dorothy Mort, Clara Randall, Phyllis Carmier “HUME”, Nellie Cassidy and Annie Gunderson, are my platonic loves and the protagonists of this work. When choosing which faces I was going to include, I looked at the way in which their faces inspired me, these tired faces, and in many cases sad faces, all gave off the impression that these were women who had been overcome by bad luck.”

Eduardo Gruber

A WORD BY THE ARTIST

A CREATIONAL MOMENT

“Jan Asselijn and Carl Orff have nothing in common. Jan was a Dutch Baroque painter from the seventeenth century, while Carl Orff was a German composer from the twentieth century who formed part of the musical neoclassicism movement.

Artists tend to be remembered by the legacy that they leave behind them through their works. The artistic sensibility of others is what allows their work to become immortal. Perhaps both artists did have one thing in common; they were both artists of one single piece of work. In reality, we know that both of them produced numerous pieces of work, but while Jan Asselijn is known for the magnetism of his painting, *The Threatened Swan*, Carl Orff found his alter ego, his equal, and practically his pseudonym in *Carmina Burana*.

I remember visiting the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam many years ago. I was visiting for a fundamental reason: I wanted to look closely at *Early Age*, a self-portrait of a young Rembrandt as I was going to discuss it in a chapter of the novel *El devorador íntimo* which I was writing at that time. And, as often happens when you visit a museum, without really knowing why, I found myself engrossed in the painting of *The Threatened Swan*, which from that very moment became one of my favourite paintings, and since that day, the image of this powerful painting has had a permanent place on the wall in the corner of my studio, alongside other clippings and notes.

Everything, absolutely everything that surrounds you in your studio will influence your work one way or another. Two years ago, my eyes looked at the swan in a different way, and as my work motto has always been, ‘if you have a good idea and you can do it, do it’, that is exactly what I did. My initial idea was to make a natural-sized sculpture of the *Threatened Swan* as portrayed in this painting. In the world of art, or more specifically, in the world of artists, chance occurrences can often have a significant impact on the final result of a piece, and this is a good example of this. Painting while listening to music is very common in studios. That day, the image of the *Threatened Swan* and the music of *Carmina Burana* aligned like two stars. In that instant, the image of the swan led me to recall something that I had once read about Orff’s work. Carl used a collection of Goliard songs from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as his inspiration, choosing a series of raw songs for soloists and choirs at random, which, when accompanied by instruments and magical images, allowed the listener to experience music as a primitive and overwhelming force.

One of the Goliard songs, which is perhaps most representative of *Carmina Burana* is the *Cignus ustus cantat*:

...Once on placid lake I floated,
Once I of great beauty boasted,
A snow-white swan...
Look served up on a platter
My bones the diners scatter
Their teeth gnash, mash, gash...

The swan complains with a certain comical tone, which is rather surprising in a twelfth century text.

Ten diners is a vocational sculpture, in which the swan is the victim of violence and this is used as a metaphor for the frequent ignoble relationship that exists between humankind and nature.”

Eduardo Gruber

GENERAL INFORMATION/ PARALLEL ACTITITIES

Bibliographical Exhibition / Documentation

Eduardo Gruber / Jorge Martins

27 October 2019 – 2 February 2020

Beginning after the opening of the exhibition, the Library-Documentation Center at MARCO presents a selection of **catalogues and publications** of Eduardo Gruber y Jorge Martins. The **documentary dossier**, which brings together links to articles, audios, videos, and other information about the artists, will be available here or on the website www.marcovigo.com at [Library/News](#) and [Exhibitions/Present](#).

Information & guided tours

The exhibition staff is available for any questions or information, as well as regular guided tours:

Daily at 6pm

‘A la carte’ group tours, please call +34 986 113904 / 113900 to book

Learning Activities

For groups of Pre-School, Primary, Secondary, High School and others.

With the support of: Obra Social “la Caixa”

From 15 October 2019

Place: exhibition halls and Laboratorio das Artes (1st floor)

Hours: Tuesday to Friday from 11am to 1:30pm / For booking please call +34 986 113900/113904

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