

Hernan Bas: *The Conceptualists*

Exhibition 18 November 2022–14 January 2023

Victoria Miro, 16 Wharf Road, London N1 7RW



Hernan Bas: *Conceptual Artist #4* (*Objectively neutral, each January he re-paints the walls of his studio an official 'Colour of the Year'*), 2022
Acrylic on linen
182.9 x 152.4 cm
72 1/8 x 60 in
© Hernan Bas
Courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro

Victoria Miro is delighted to present *The Conceptualists*, an exhibition of new paintings by Hernan Bas.

Hernan Bas is celebrated for works that, permeated by an aura of eroticism and decadence and loaded with codes and double-meanings, point to the intricacies of self-identity while celebrating moments of transformation – the ordinary becoming extraordinary. While earlier paintings hinge on characters with nascent identities and burgeoning interests, the works in this exhibition follow a new theme, in which Bas' protagonists engage in a variety of obsessive pursuits that, deemed strange under everyday circumstances, might be rationalised or even championed when considered as 'conceptual art'.

As 'Conceptualists', the characters in the paintings are emboldened to indulge their passions – chewing gum every waking hour of the day, gilding the leaves of dying house plants, mixing paint with water sourced exclusively from Niagara Falls – with vigour and seriousness as they construct their self-made worlds. As viewers we are invited to consider the way meaning shifts with context and how, under the auspices of art, eccentricity gains a particular allure.

Speaking about the works on view, the artist says, 'What before might have been seen as a rogues' gallery of "weirdos" is now, under the guise and cover of "art", a series of portraits of intellectuals. The humour I hope these works convey is intentional... I don't consider my series of paintings to be a parody, but I have enjoyed the liberty of making portraits of artists who, while taking themselves seriously, might concede they're being quite "clever".'

The exhibition is accompanied by a new, limited-edition publication featuring a collaboration between the artist and writer Linda Yablonsky, who has crafted a series of narratives around *The Conceptualists* and how their works have come to curious fruition.

About the artist

Hernan Bas, born in Miami, Florida in 1978, lives and works in Miami. Solo exhibitions of his work have been presented at Space K, Seoul, Korea; CAC Málaga, Spain; Kunstverein Hannover, Germany; the Rubell Museum, Miami, USA and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, USA. A collection display of works by the artist was recently on view at Rubell Museum.

His work has also been shown as part of significant exhibitions at the Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; the Bass Museum of Art, Miami, USA; Busan Biennale, Korea; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany; the Whitney Biennial; and the Venice Biennale as part of *The Collectors*, conceived by Elmgreen & Dragset for the Nordic and Danish Pavilions in 2009.

Works by the artist are included in the collections of MoMA; the Whitney; the Brooklyn Museum of Art; the Detroit Institute of Arts; the Hirshhorn; MOCA Los Angeles; SFMoMA; MFA Houston; the Rubell Family Collection, among others.

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