

RYAN TRAVIS CHRISTIAN
BANG BANG PLAY

We are delighted to announce the opening of our new exhibition space in the Chamberí district of Madrid. The inaugural show is the first individual exhibition in Europe by the American artist Ryan Travis Christian (b. Oakland, California, 1983), who is critically recognized as one of the most significant figures in the Chicago art scene. This opening coincides with our gallery's participation in ARCOmadrid 2020, and it marks a new phase in which the gallery will represent artists who are distinguishing themselves on the current art scene by the alternative approaches and fresh language they offer. This new base in the city centre will bring our exhibition program focused on young artists closer to a wide audience, and these shows will alternate with exhibits by the more established artists who have brought the gallery renown over the last twenty - five years.

Ryan Travis Christian's visual language is unmistakable: his compositions display dense layers of graphite, and their obsessive pencil lines delineate high-contrast graphic fantasies, hypnotic geometric patterns, characters out of pop culture moving in slow motion in hazy, surreal landscapes. They are inspired by old political caricatures and satirical cartoons, the traditional hand-drawn animation of the 1930s (especially the work of Ub Iwerks), the Chicago Imagists of the late 1960s (the artists who made up the group Hairy Who), 1980s pop culture, videogames, advertising.

BANG BANG PLAY takes us into a black-and-white world of drawings that are not animated but are full of movement, presenting stories that are strange, violent, chilling, sexual; existentialist allegories, sometimes despairing, deeply fascinating, figures that are outwardly cheery against a background revealing danger, seductive and banal at the same time. With a touch of black humour, Christian addresses themes as varied as fear, hope, doubt, depression, death, drugs, alcohol, self-medicating, nature, sex, gender, class, politics and the economy.

Ryan Travis Christian has exhibited in galleries and art spaces in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Toronto and Puerto Rico. In 2013 he executed two major mural projects in Chicago, and he had a show at the Contemporary Art Museum in Raleigh, North Carolina. His work has been included in group exhibitions in London, Rotterdam, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Baltimore and Dallas. In 2020 he exhibited as part of ZOO at the MIMA—the Milliennium Iconoclast Museum of Art—in Brussels, along with another of our gallery's artists, Todd James. Christian is also intensely active as a curator, having organized shows since 2008, seeking to establish networks for contact and exchange with creators from the East and West Coasts and energizing Chicago's cultural life, bringing projects from other parts of the country to Illinois and taking Midwestern artists to the rest of the United States.

For further information or for images, please contact us.