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GALERIE

Mariano Rinaldi Goñi

LA LOCURA TROPICAL

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It is not without reason that Mariano Rinaldi Goñi's new exhibition carries the title "La Locura tropical" (Tropical Madness): in their fleshy mesh of lines, orgies of color and narrative strands these paintings are sultry jungle turned into painting. Goñi's painting speaks—no sings—of an untamable original lust for life that transforms all it encounters.

Again the paintings are dominated by female nudes, "dominated" in the literal sense: these are no compliant beauties who passively submit to the lewd gazes of the beholders, but strong and confident figures who return the gaze and challenge the viewer. Like the forces of nature depicted in Goñi's paintings—tempests, floods, erupting volcanoes, firestorms—they embody the emotional energies that seethe beneath our politely structured surfaces, emotions that keep us alive but that are always in motion, that remain unpredictable and keep eluding our attempts to control them. All of a sudden an abyss may open up beneath our feet, spurting out cascades of red-hot lava, like the volcano at the center of the painting "Antarctica" (2012). This life force will also wreak destruction, but from this destruction new life can re-emerge, just as the beds of lava, once cooled off and solidified, provide fertile ground for new vegetation. In a painting like "Atlanta" (2014) we can almost smell the putrid stench of dead fish and decay, but above all rises, like a force of nature, the figure of a woman whose proud and unembarrassed beauty springs directly from her fundamental femininity.

When Goñi is painting container ships, as in "Containers" (2014), his interest these symbols of trade is not directed towards economic phenomena, but towards the dynamics of exchange, interaction, movement, giving and taking: that is to say, the essence of life. The harbor is not a safe haven for ships to berth, but a place of departure, filled with the smell of openness and adventure, the lure of the unknown, with ships as messengers and witnesses of a wide and wondrous world full of unfathomed possibilities. The incessant pulsating of emotional energies and erotic drives is also expressed in the small series, humorously coded depictions of stories from Goñi's extended circle of friends and acquaintances, with constantly new amorous constellations, entanglements and dramas written by life itself.

In Goñi's paintings, what is depicted merges seamlessly with the form it is rendered in, for it is expressed already in the act of painting. The paintings' energy is in no small part owed to Goñi's own tireless drive: even when cooking he cannot stop drawing sketches on loose bits of paper, the remainders of paint on his palette are used to spontaneously create small compositions, and he is happiest when can spend his days painting. The dynamics of sweeping lines is already familiar to us from his previous work, and here again it provides the basic framework of the compositions. What is new, however, are the immediately painterly elements, wildly splashed paint, at times directly applied from the tube, at times scratched from the palette and thrown onto the canvas, breaking up the precise structures of drawing. In the manner of Georges Bataille's notion of "l'informe" they embody the anarchistic indomitability of life's enduring erotic drives.

NOTES
ON THE
EXHIBIT
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Text: Martin Oskar Kramer