

NINO MIER GALLERY

LOS ANGELES | BRUSSELS | NEW YORK

Secundino Hernández
Los Angeles I Gallery One
February 27 – March 30, 2024

Nino Mier Gallery is thrilled to present our first solo exhibition with Spanish artist Secundino Hernández. The exhibition features work from two series developed over the course of the past year, including horizontal format stitched canvases and vertical abstractions characterized by their atrophied islands of color. The artist's solo Los Angeles debut, the exhibition will be on view from February 27 – March 30, 2024.

A tension between spontaneity and rigor structures both Hernández's process and the viewer's experience of his work. Dominated by saturated, high contrast color schemes employing shades like black, magenta, cerulean and forest green, the compositions offer a challenging boldness that reflects the efforts of their making. Each canvas indexes his body at work, as their surfaces are filled with gestures both bold and fine, from combusting swaths of colorful paint to intricate stitching.

Likewise, the physicality of Hernández's work intrudes on the exhibition space. Foregoing a conventional wall hang, the artist has suspended a series of stitched paintings from the ceiling, radiating down the center of the gallery. The works are hung in groups of two, their backs aligned so viewers must snake through the installation to view each work. Although the paintings are static, experiencing them is a temporal endeavor, as one's perception of them changes significantly depending on the section of focus. Hernández likens this process to walking through a forest, an atmosphere that engulfs from all sides. Indeed, the vertical thrust of the canvases' brushstrokes and stitch patterns recall those of elegantly long birch trees that materialize in prismatic light against a dark night.

Each attempt to ground the installation or reduce it to metaphor – like the that of the aforementioned woods – becomes a bait-and-switch: viewing a Hernández painting is a continual process of location and unmooring. The immediately rhythmic, propulsive quality of his compositions belie his studied rigor, which becomes evident with sustained looking. Viewed up close, additional structures crystallize, like that of the zig-zagging lines superimposed upon patterns created by acrylic and dye on the fabric's surface. Before the painting process, Hernández stiches together discarded materials to form the canvas, a process that involves both conjoining and separating sections of fabric. Although the works in the exhibition are purely non-figural, abstracted traces of the body nevertheless appear throughout: If we liken the canvas to the skin of painting, the painted sutures are scars, uniting the new and the old in a single surface.

Hernández's desire to salvage neglected materials in his stitched works speaks to his overall attention to texture and material, especially those that might be judged as waste. In his vertical works, his surfaces have sustained all manner of attrition—scratches, scraping, peeling. Patches of vibrant color such as mustard yellow and deep red blossom within largely dark grounds. The artist has compared this process to a pendulum, where addition and subtraction work together to form compositions caught between agony and ecstasy. Within our forest of stitched canvas, these compositions resemble landforms viewed from above. It is Hernandez's provocative ability to formalize that which is informal – and then to return it once more to the informal – that makes his vision entirely his own.

Secundino Hernández (b. 1975, Madrid, ES; lives and works in Madrid, ES) has held solo exhibitions with Miettinen Collection, Berlin, DE; The Insular Museum, Cabildo of La Palma, ES; CAC Málaga, ES; Taidehalli Helsinki, FI; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, CN; Maison Louis Carré, Bazoches-sur-Guyonne, FR. Institutional group exhibitions include Takeuchi Collection, What Museum, Tokyo, JP; Meadows Museum, Dallas, Texas, US; Taguchi Art Collection, JP; Royal Academy, London, UK; Kunsthalle Krems, Krems, AS; Kunstverein Weiden, AS; Rubell Family Collection/Contemporary Arts Foundation, Miami, US; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Español, Valladolid, ES; Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, DE; Art Center Los Angeles, US. Hernández is represented in institutional and private collections worldwide, including Art Gallery of Ontario, CA; Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; CAC Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Málaga, ES; Meadows Museum, Dallas, Texas, US; Helga de Alvear Foundation, Cáceres, ES; Kunstdepot Göschenen, CH; National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, UK; North Carolina Museum, US; Friedrichs Collection, Bonn, DE; The Rubell Family Collection, Miami, US; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, CN; Zabudowicz Collection, Sarvisalo, FI.