

Press Release

José Manuel Ballester

Bipolar Universe (From Havana to Moscow)

Form 14th September to 16th November 2023

Opening: 14th September from 12 to 22.

We're starting the new season, within **APERTURA MADRID GALLERY WEEKEND** organized by **ARTEMADRID**, with the exhibition ***Bipolar Universe (From Havana to Moscow)*** by **José Manuel Ballester**, where we've gathered together his latest photographs, taken in his first trip to Havana (Cuba) a few months ago, with images of three other very important countries in his career such as Arab Emirates, Brazil, China, Russia and South Africa.

In his many trips around the cities of these countries, Ballester has noticed the way they seem to be marked by a political, social and economic situation which he calls "bipolar", that is to say, they're countries in a continuous attempt to change, to evolve in every institutional aspect but which, seen with our eyes, seem to be in a perennial regression in every political establishment.

Ballester presents in this show his vision of the situation in these countries, in constant construction / destruction, through architectures and infrastructures in the cities he has visited with the additional intention of establishing a profound relationship with human nature, as he explains us: " In this exhibition I intend to show aspects of a bipolar reality. A universe that is nourished by the tension of the opposites, as white needs black to reassert its qualities, the world develops between concepts and models opposing each other. As far as human nature is concerned, we spend our life choosing and making decisions continuously: we act conditioned by principles, beliefs and suppositions at every moment, in fact, having our own criteria enables this exhausting process of constant selection since it determines a sense of direction in every circumstance. This attitude allows us to follow a developed model, mainly resulting from the education we received. For this purpose I've centered the exhibition on images of places like Cuba, China, Brazil and Russia, in a game of contrasts which brings to light the fact that the world and its variations is there. Natural and artificial, rural and urban, ostentation and simplicity, wealth and poverty, order and chaos, a mosaic of images selected around these aspects make up the current exhibition at Galería Daniel Cuevas, as an introduction to a wider and more diverse topic, which appears in very different contexts, as the places chosen here".

José Manuel Ballester (Madrid 1960), painter and photographer, degree in Fine Arts in 1984 by the Universidad Complutense. National Engraving Award (1999). Villa de Madrid Goya Painting Award (2006)

and afterwards Community of Madrid Photography Award (2008). National Photography Award (2010) and recently Enaire Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award (2023).

His artistic career started as a painter. From 1990 he began to combine painting and photography. From his many exhibitions we highlight "Transient areas" (Valencia, 2003), "Setting Out" (New York 2003) or "Room 523" National Museum Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, 2005), "Fervor of Metropolis" National Art Gallery (Sao Paulo, 2010), "The Abstraction of Reality", Sala Alcalá 31, (Community of Madrid, 2011), "Forests of Light", Tabacalera Building (Madrid,2013), "Allumar" Museu da Electricidade (Lisboa 2015), "Bilbao 2020-05-15", Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao, 2020) and "Hidden Spaces 2007-2020" at New Jerusalem Museum in Moscow. His artworks are part of the collections of Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Marugame Museum of Spanish Contemporary Art in Japan, IVAM in Valencia, Pérez Art Museum y Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation in Miami, Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, Patio Herreriano in Valladolid, Museo Würth in Logroño, Fundación Telefónica, Banco Espírito Santo in Lisbon, National Art Gallery in Sao Paulo, Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Iberdrola Collection and Cristina Masaveu Peter Collection.

For more information and photographs contact the gallery: Galería Daniel Cuevas Tf.: 00 34 91 308 15 69 / 70

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