

German Herrera

Nominated for Bitmap by Celina Lunsford, Frankfurt am Main

At the first glance of Germán Herrera's digitally rendered still-lives one becomes seduced with his perfected amalgamation of constructing subject matter like plant-life, objects d'art, architectural elements and portraiture. Thematically and aesthetically he veers away from the compacted high speed world of digital characteristics of pixels, cloned imagery, videos and color. The more images which one sees, the more one can describe his style as one of "photographic forming", in a way a still-life which has been morphed into form. The monochromatic images slightly resemble a pencil-drawing, but it is the superb digital printing technique which reveals a fresh surface that is more than photography or drawing. His attention to the texture of the subjects coupled with forms like a face, hand, leaves or a child's scribble reflect his interest of the beauty of withering cultural symbols and organic constitute.

The fact that there is something old, faded, and dream-like in these images makes one almost think that we have discovered the first digital photographs which were somehow being made already in the 15th century, but recently have been rediscovered. Or are these images are in reality of objects which are from another world of life which one must travel through time to see...things which Lewis Carroll or Jorge Borges knew of but were only able to write?

Through using digital manipulation of photographs and at times illustration he has entered a world of which is illusionary and mythological. He is piecing together his memory in photographs. His earlier work as a street photography trained him to see the surreal in the reality of the everyday. He used the street more like a stage where objects are thrown to the lights and shadows, than a place to document social circumstance. These documentary works also show a love of manipulating (just through composing, not digitally) the details of the world around him but in a much louder form than the wandering still-lives. He abstracted the people in his early photographs by closely cropping them, making them out of focus or symbolizing them as a form by backlighting them. In his new digital works human forms appear as ethereal shadows and broken details.

Germán Herrera was born in 1957 in Mexico City. Since 1980 his work has been exhibited in the United States, Latin America and in Europe including at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Museo de Artes Moderno, Bogotá and the Fotografie Forum international, Frankfurt am Main. His works are represented in Museum collections in Mexico and the United States. He is the recipient of two Marin Council grants and has been nominated for the Eureka Awards, granted by the Fleischhacker Foundation.

His most recent works stem from a publication project, which he titles, "A Book of Mirrors." His original prints are 40 x 50 cm archival pigment prints on Somerset paper. These are additioned at 25 with 3 artist's proofs.

He introduces this book of photographs by writing, "A flock of feelings, disguised as images. We also create ideas, all of which, move on to become reality. Then you look...What am I creating?...a book of self. "

Text by Celina Lunsford October 2005