

Ethan Cohen Gallery Presents

AVELINO SALA:

RIOT PAINTINGS

June 22 – July 24, 2017

Avelino Sala (Gijón b. 1972) presents a group of works based on the concept of identity through symbols such as currency or flags, probing the fragility of the state, of the individual before the state and of order itself. His works explore the power of political and populist iconography as imagined by the artist. In constructing his own invented menagerie of agitprop symbols he deconstructs the genre, questioning its uses and its insidious appeal. The artist questions, through objects of legitimacy such as money, the idea of the nation-state as a nucleus of identity and power. In the process, he reveals the hidden possibility of resistance by the individual, the options of revolt.

Sala's layers of meaning are built into a series of works that draw on the iconic visual debris of contemporary media to offer us a new reading. In the work *Action (Riot) Painting*, he intermixes genres to create a kind of performance piece by the objects themselves which he anchors in the tradition of action art. For this purpose he marshalls paintings and sculpture and installation with police riot shields featuring metaphorical flags of deconstructed nations. He presents the flag of the USA in three acts, as the axis of the proposal, as well as those of other first world economic powers (China, Germany) along with countries that share US borders such as Mexico.

In *Quick Silver* and *The Map is not the territory* Sala addresses the idea of national currency as a bulwark of identity and a way of life. These imaginary maps on a sea of gold are nothing more than luxurious representations of a sordid world that through money shapes its borders. In *Cocktail Molotov*, Sala works the Carrara marble in the classical style - perhaps the most prized stone denoting the origin of enduring cultural raw material. In the series of watercolors and sprays entitled *New Landscapes*, the artist takes you to the new territories of a devastated world informed by a series of Trumpian subjects featured in his speeches invoking racism, objectification of women, the 'Wall' with Mexico and the like. In *New Landscapes* Avelino Sala presents the future that has arrived, the dystopia has already reached us.

ETHAN COHEN NEW YORK

251 W 19TH ST, NEW YORK, NY 10011 192 VERPLANCK AVE, BEACON, NY 12508
T 212-625-1250 F 212-274-1518

ETHAN COHEN KuBe

T 845-765-8988

www.ecfa.com ecfa@ecfa.com