



***Alejandro Garmendia:
El Ingenio Revolucionario***

01.07.2023 - 22.09.2023

Paseo del Faro 33, 20008, Donostia-San Sebastian, Guipúzcoa, Basque Country, Spain



Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario

July 1 - September 22, 2023

Press release

Villa Magdalena is thrilled to announce *Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario*, a solo presentation by the late Spanish artist Alejandro Garmendia (San Sebastián, 1959-2017) beginning on July 1st until September 22nd. This exhibition takes its title from two central works in the show, a painting and a sculpture bearing the same name which are being shown together for the first time on this occasion. *El Ingenio Revolucionario*, which roughly translates to “the revolutionary wit” is both an ironic statement and a revelation: the author thinks he has invented something that would embody a revolution of form and concept. The emblem of a new way of seeing or looking at the world, thus *El Ingenio Revolucionario*. A sarcastic look at the author, himself.

Alejandro Garmendia possessed a subversive attitude and an ingenious approach to the aesthetic structure and formal aspects of landscape and architecture. He commandeered them to a point of departure where a plethora of images manifest themselves in a variety of ways, documenting the non-existent and creating the physically impossible. Scenes that do not necessarily conform to one particular style, ultimately present a distanced vision of an emotional character filled with solitude and melancholy. Garmendia reveals to the viewer a new painted irreality.

On view is a concise selection of works including collage and paintings from the 90's which trace the development of Garmendia's imaginary spaces, the predominant theme of his artistic production during this period. A sculpture, *El Ingenio Revolucionario* (2003-2004), and a selection of instrumental musical compositions by the artist accompany the earlier works, emphasizing the atmospheric nature of Garmendia's oeuvre.

One night in Madrid during the late 80s, the artist stole a handful of vintage architecture magazines from a party. Some of these publications of Spanish, French, and German origin date back to 1900, others are from the 1920s. The older magazines featured Art Nouveau interiors and the later ones documented the early stages of Art Deco. These historical documents are the source of the ghostly interiors we see in the photo-emulsion paintings as well as the enigmatic upside down chandelier that the sculpture in the exhibition ambiguously depicts.

The overall effect as one contemplates the relationship between the different elements in this presentation is the creation of a bizarre environment completely displaced in time and space. Disorienting scenes of decontextualized architecture, guided by the artist's principle of distorting any logical connection to his physical surroundings, become a new meta-physical order. One sees different versions of odd domestic environments. Phantasmagorical objects shift, transforming what we are looking at into another kind of pictorial space. Despite the presence of household objects, life seems to have left this realm long ago. The small collage studies grew into larger works the artist would execute and other more ambitious plans that were never realized in his lifetime.

Alejandro Garmendia lived and worked in numerous cities including San Sebastián, Madrid and New York. He studied Fine Art at the Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU) in Bilbao. Significant solo exhibitions have taken place at Galería Masha Prieto (1988, Madrid, Spain); Galería Antonio Machón (1994, Madrid, Spain); Galería Colón XVI (2000, Bilbao); Generous Miracles Gallery (2001, New York City, United States); McClain Gallery (2007, Houston, United States). In 2007 he exhibited alongside Andreas Gursky, Jan Fabre, Per Barclay and Man Ray at the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid in the group exhibition *Perceptions*. In March 2018, a year after his death, Alejandro Garmendia was honored through the retrospective, *Alejandro Garmendia: Paisajes, enigma y melancolía* at the Sala Kubo Museum in San Sebastian, Spain. An attempt to reevaluate his life trajectory. In 2023 Garmendia was included in the group exhibition *Años 90* at the San Telmo Museum (San Sebastian), a survey of the various artist collectives that were active in the Basque Country in the late 80's, 90's and beginning of the 2000's. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Reina Sofía Museum (Madrid) and the San Telmo Museum (San Sebastian).



Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario

Tuesday to Sunday by appointment only.

For more information: info@villamagdalenaa33.com, +34 677 356 997, +34 659 867 034



Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario

July 1 - September 22



Alejandro Garmendia
El Ingenio Revolucionario
2003-2004
Wood, copper, glass, resin and sound
installation
105 x 193 x 76 cm
(41 x 76 x 30 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
El Ingenio Revolucionario
1994 - 1998
Varnish, resin and photo emulsion on
canvas
244 x 361 cm
(96 x 142 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1997
Varnish, wax and photo emulsion on
canvas
100 x 163 cm
(39 x 64 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1998
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1998
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1995
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1995
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1995
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
2004
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1995
Photomontage
57 x 48 cm
(22 x 19 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1995
Photomontage
48 x 53 cm
(19 x 21 inches)



Alejandro Garmendia
Untitled
1995
Photomontage
44 x 47 cm
(17 x 19 inches)

Alejandro Garmendia, *Up the Hill*, 2013, 0m 56s

Alejandro Garmendia, *Littlelikebig*, ca. 2010, 1m 04s

Alejandro Garmendia, *Mieres*, 2013, 13m 00s

Alejandro Garmendia, *Frapasam*, 2005, 1m 26s

Alejandro Garmendia, *FLODZOGH*, 2014, 0m 56s

Alejandro Garmendia, *Sad Satie*, ca. 2010, 2m 16s

Alejandro Garmendia, *The ingenious one*, 2014, 1m 30s

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Installation view: *Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario*, Villa Magdalena, Donostia-San Sebastián. Photography by Idoia Unzurrunzaga



Installation view: *Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario*, Villa Magdalena, Donostia-San Sebastián. Photography by Idoia Unzurrunzaga



Installation view: *Alejandro Garmendia: El Ingenio Revolucionario*, Villa Magdalena, Donostia-San Sebastián. Photography by Idoia Unzurrunzaga

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