



CRITICS' PICKS MADRID

Omar Rodriguez-Graham

Max Estrella Galería de Arte | Santo Tomé, 6, Patio

November 23, 2023 - February 3, 2024

By Juan José Santos 
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Omar Rodriguez-Graham, *El Largo Asedio de la Noche* (The Long Siege of the Night), 2022, oil on linen, 43 3/8 x 42 1/8 x 1 5/8".

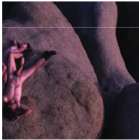
In Omar Rodriguez-Graham’s solo exhibition “Ritmo Doble” (Double Rhythm) (all works cited, 2022), we encounter a myriad of colorful entropic explosions. Working to fuse the figurative and the nonobjective, the artist begins with well-known paintings from the Renaissance and Baroque periods, which he digitally abstracts until they are unrecognizable, preserving and reimagining the emotional dynamism characteristic of each era. Simultaneously invoking and transcending the art-historical canon, these newly amorphous images are then translated to large-format artworks that insinuate a dizzying velocity—a *double rhythm*.

Rodriguez-Graham’s creations have lost their chromatic balance, geometric references, and vanishing points. But if one spends enough time observing them, an underlying order emerges. *Colibrí Azul* (Blue Hummingbird) shows a clash of vivid diagonal lines, arches, and strata, as if the canvases from Paolo Uccello’s seminal “The Battle of San Romano” series (ca. 1435–55) have been shuffled and reinvorgated in Technicolor. This whimsical motif is further reflected in *La Oscuridad del Sol* (The Darkness of the Sun) where a splattering of innumerable multicolored curvatures overcome the frame, projecting comic-bubble-like silhouettes from the gallery wall. *El Largo Asedio de la Noche* (The Long Siege of the Night) shows a similar amalgam of hand-painted textures, with varicolored tendrilous patterns encapsulated on a wooden cutout. The works’ titles, which evolve from the hummingbird’s morning song to the eclipse of nightfall, bring order to Rodriguez-Graham’s chaotic contours, enacting an aesthetic that is both historical and futuristic, time-honored and visionary.

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