

MARC BADIA

You'll never hear a star say "there goes a falling man"

"(...) what the sense of humour brings to light is the orthopaedic nature of all language
and the arbitrariness of all rules (...)"

Leonardo Gómez Haro, *Del humor en el arte contemporáneo: teoría y práctica*.
Ars (Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I), Valencia, 2014.

You'll never hear a star say, "there goes a falling man" is the title of Marc Badia's first solo exhibition at L21 Gallery, and also a line from a song by rapper Lucas Pulcro entitled "Epilogue". Following a narrative intention, the name of the song is successively used by Badia to title the works that comprise this new series of paintings (*Epilogue I, Epilogue II, Epilogue III and Epilogue IV*).

This is how a story begins with a character watering a trainer. An almond tree sprouts next to an avocado tree. As the epilogue progresses, the plants grow, blossom and bear fruit. The cycle of life. In a dystopian twist, the vegetation eats the character, spreads across the scene, uprooting the columns that frame it. Perhaps a possible result of the motto "Nature is taking back what belongs to it"?

To create this dystopian tableau, Badia brings together some elements from his usual iconography: trainers, the nosey figure, the crocodile, the plants. These symbols are a potpourri that comes from the culture the artist has grown up with, embodied by embracing the contradictions they also imply, effectively reflecting our contemporary condition. For example, the crocodile is linked to a line from The Notorious B.I.G: "I'm sewing tigers on my shirt. And alligators", which demonstrates the contradiction hidden in hip-hop culture. On the one hand, faced with the impossibility of the lower classes to afford a Lacoste T-shirt, the crocodile is sewn on, thus breaking down a barrier between classes. On the other hand, it is precisely this imaginary that produces the system that perpetuates the fact that these social classes exist.

In relation to the idea that our identity is nourished partly by our cultural context and partly by our personal experiences, most of the plants that Badia "portrays" are part of his everyday life. The almond tree, for example, also alludes to the material crisis we are experiencing if we think about how its exploitation at a national level has declined due to its cost, and instead it is cheaper to import them from Asia. At the same time, through the almond tree, Marc recalls the legacy of his grandfather, who, when he was very young, told him: "you should paint, they didn't let us paint anything". Our contemporary world is full of contradictions driven by an existence that is both global and personal.

- *You'll never hear a star say "there goes a shooting man"*.
- *That reminds me of the meme "A picture of earth before and after your opinion". The picture of earth doesn't change, of course.*

An exchange between Marc Badia & Cristina Ramos