

# THE RYDER

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## IVANA DE VIVANCO

### *La Yegua de Santiago*

14 September – 11 November 2023

Tuesday - Friday, 11:30am - 7pm

Saturdays, 11am - 2.30pm

Historical narratives have always been fed by the epic of a war-driven aristocratic class: heroes who win battles on horseback, kings who fight kings. Gradually, this epic of violence and abuse has become part of our account of the past, leading us to think that this way of “making history” was the only possible way. With *La Yegua de Santiago* (St. James’s Mare), Ivana de Vivanco invites us to think that perhaps we were wrong.

In this exhibition imagination, joy, irony and colour become the tools with which to “make history”, creating an alternative epic that dialogues with a present where the heroes have fallen off their horses. Departing from a foundational event of our history such as that of the apostle St. James, the artist invites us to approach a way of looking at history where subversion is achieved through empathy and fiction, facilitating an emotional space in which violence and pain are not evident, but can still be felt, together with many other emotions.

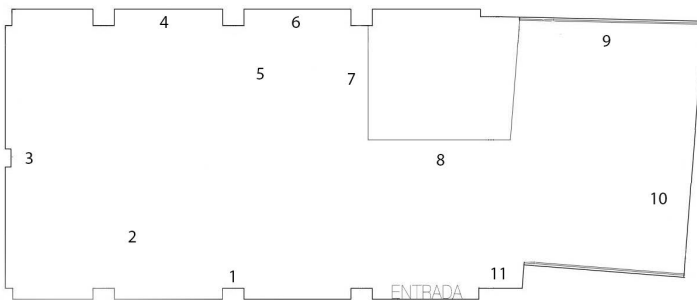
St. James’ history is closely linked to that of our country and as early as in the 15th century he is declared the patron saint of Spain by the Pope. However, centuries before that, his iconography will appear in the chronicles of the peninsula as a warrior saint, depicted in battle to help the chosen people. This discourse of domination of the other was first manifested at the time of the Christian conquest of the Iberian Peninsula with “Santiago matamoros” (St. James the Moor-slayer) who fought against the Muslim, then as “Santiago mataindios” (St. James the Indian-slayer) during the conquest of America and has even been extended to the civil war as “Santiago matarajos” (St. James the Commie-slayer). This saint has always been represented in battle on the back of his famous white horse and always on the Catholic side, the winning side. In this exhibition, Ivana confronts this iconography of violent epic by means of a symbolic, simple and effective gesture: the dissidence of the horse that decides to dismount itself from the saint and become a mare.

The origins of The RYDER’s space, a former stable in the Lavapiés neighbourhood, are used by de Vivanco to create a situated narrative, in which St. James’s mare has emancipated herself and becomes the protagonist of her own life, devoting herself entirely to exploring the limits of her own pleasure, making the gallery her own home. Through an installation composed by a series of canvases of various sizes, video works and sculptures, the viewer has the opportunity to peek into various scenes of the Mare’s intimate life, beginning with the exact moment when she gets rid of St. James, and ending with a video piece in which we witness a psychoanalysis session where the Mare tries to analyse herself to heal her trauma. The stories of death, characteristic of the saint’s iconography, are replaced here by tales of pleasure in the canvases and with sculptures that refer to the hybrid, the non-normative.

All the works are influenced by a baroque aesthetic, with a deliberately acid palette of colours where the solemnity of the historical is abandoned to write a new epic in which the emotions of the Mare become the reflection of the emotions of “others”, and in particular of women, who have historically been in charge of putting the body, of keeping the community alive; and whose voices were more concerned with weaving and keeping alive the present than in writing the great stories that would be remembered in the future. All their hands become the frame of the work *Holding Function* (2023) and embrace the story of the whole exhibition to create a polyphonic and sensorial discourse, an emotional and moving story that needs no heroes and that may be written by any of us.

## IVANA DE VIVANCO (1989)

Ivana de Vivanco is a Chilean-Peruvian artist based in Berlin, Germany. She studied fine art at the University of Chile in Santiago and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig. She recently exhibited at Instituto de Visión, Bogotá; Santiago Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago; Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Berlin; Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt; Art Cologne; Bank Mab Society, Shanghai; Persona Curada, Paris; The RYDER Projects, Madrid. Her work is part of the following collections: Xiao Museum of Contemporary Art Rizhao (China); Jorge Pérez Collection (El Espacio 23 / Pérez Art Museum Miami) (USA); Kunsthalle der Sparkasse Leipzig (DE); Fondazione Imago Mundi Treviso (IT) and MAP Marquez Art Projects Miami (USA).



- 1. Estudio para un estandarte de la Organización de Yeguas Unidas (OYU) II, (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas, cotton and metal  
75 x 46 x 7 cm
- 2. Relicario (2023)**  
Glazed ceramic, steel and mare's hair  
130 x 20 x 20 cm
- 3. Holding function (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
320 x 290 x 4.5 cm
- 4. Playing House (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
300 x 190 x 4.5 cm
- 5. Al trote (2023)**  
Glazed ceramic and acrylic on canvas  
300 x 190 x 4.5 cm
- 6. Estudio para un estandarte de la Organización de Yeguas Unidas (OYU) I (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas, cotton and metal  
80 x 46 x 7 cm
- 7. Drag (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
50 x 40 x 4.5 cm
- 8. Refundación (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
90 x 70 x 4.5 cm
- 9. Trabajo extático (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
220 x 190 x 4.5 cm
- 10. La Yegua de Santiago (2023)**  
HD video, 4k  
12" 12'  
Edition of 3 + 1AP \*
- 11. Santiago's bite (2023)**  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
30 x 25 x 3 cm