

Manuel Aja Espil: Worlds of Exile

August 3rd – October 14th, 2023



Contemplation, 2023, Oil on linen, 45 5/8 x 32 5/8 in (116 x 83 cm)



World of Exile, 2023, Oil on linen, 56 1/4 x 41 in (143 x 104 cm)

Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary is pleased to present new paintings by Manuel Aja Espil. Opening August 3rd, *Worlds of Exile* is his first solo exhibition in New York.

Manuel Aja Espil's introspective practice leads him to research the history and materiality of painting. His work depicts imaginary universes that are a fusion of European and Argentine historic pictorial tradition and contemporary iconography. He blends landscape, memory, and fiction, creating familiar, while simultaneously disorienting, compositions.

Aja Espil's intellectual practice was born of his need to create stories. Originally an aspiring filmmaker, he abandoned his initial plan and enrolled in the Artists' Program at the Universidad Torcuato Di Tella in Buenos Aires. Aja Espil's most recent paintings include seemingly malformed caricatures, lacking identifying features, such as gender, race, or personality, who are derived from characters of his childhood cartoons, comics, and movies. The paintings' pictorial style borders on science fiction, as deconstructed stereotypical representations inhabit landscapes of the European romantic tradition.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue that includes a text by Gabriela Rangel, a New York-based, Venezuelan curator, critic, and writer. She was the director and chief curator

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of Visual Arts at Americas Society from 2004 to 2019 and the artistic director at MALBA, Buenos Aires from 2019 to 2021.

Recent solo exhibitions of the artist's work include *Los Viajes (Journeys)*, Grasa Galería, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2020); *Joseph Andreas*, Quadro Arte Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2018); *Anton Regularis*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2017); and *Wanda vs. Azymetrikah*, Imaginario Galería, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2012). Recent group exhibitions include *Marzo: Mujer, Memoria y Malvinas*, Casa de la Cultura del Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2023); *Arte en Juego (Art at Play)*, Fundación PROA, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2022); *Despues de Babel. Traducciones rioplatenses*, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2021); *Terapia (Therapy)*, Gabriela Rangel, Verónica Rossi and Santiago Villanueva, Museum of Latin American Art Buenos Aires (MALBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina (2021); *Bienal de Arte Joven (Young Artists Biennial)*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2017); *London Summer Intensive 2017 Showcase*, Camden Arts Centre, London, United Kingdom (2017); and *La Cosa Soy Yo*, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2016). Manuel Aja Espil has held residencies at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York (2022), the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture in Maine (2019), The London Summer Intensive 2017, SLADE University of Fine Arts y Camden Arts Centre, in London, United Kingdom (2017); and the Artists' Program, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2016). He was awarded the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant in 2022; the Stimulus Award from the Asociación Amigos del Museo Rosa Galisteo in 2019; and a Fellowship from the Fondo Nacional de las Artes (National Fund of The Arts), Argentina, in 2018.

Hutchinson Modern & Contemporary was founded by Isabella Hutchinson in 2020. HM&C specializes in modern and contemporary art of the Americas, with a focus on Latin American, U.S. Latinx(o/a), and Caribbean art. Through our exhibitions, we aim to augment the visibility of work by artists from these groups and foster critical engagement with their practices.

For additional information about Manuel Aja Espil, please visit hutchinsonmodern.com, and for other inquiries contact info@hutchinsonmodern.com.



Manuel Aja Espil in his Buenos Aires studio, 2022