

PRESS RELEASE

Carlos Amoraless

MEME ANIMISM

October 19 – November 16, 2019.

Opening October 18, 5 - 7 pm

Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to present Carlos Amoraless' (Mexico City, 1970) third solo, *Meme Animism*, in The Bakery. The show links into that of the main gallery space, Dick Verdult's *The Great Hanging Icon Flagellation*, through the relationship between the two artists.

The two have written each other extensively over the years, with Amoraless bringing out Verdult's music on his Nuevos Ricos record label. The two shows act as counterpoints, both approaching two-dimensionality from each artists' vernacular. As written by Amoraless in 2011 for Verdult's publication *and on Sundays we celebrate Friday*:

"...Dick Verdult is, paradoxically, a naïve artist according to the discourse of the contemporary art world - because he doesn't give a damn - but also a man who has lived his fifty years intensively, producing works that help us understand, without prejudice, the cultural mutations of today..."



Meme Animism 01, 2019

An installation of twenty-two small scale drawings, *Meme Animism* explores our current relationship to image, authorship and meaning, through the internet meme. Internet memes involve concepts or images that are propagated and shared through various social media sites to convey a particular meaning or idea. Through repetitive digital copying, pasting and publishing, images and concept can be hijacked and distorted by their online avatars, negating the original intentions of the artists. Innocent fictional characters can be gradually transformed into internet hate symbols, icons for fringe groups or signifiers of political preferences. As such, the agency and will of the artist are made void.

Taking on the phenomenon of internet memes, Amoraless inverts the depersonalised practice through his hand drawn images. The twenty-two drawings depict representations of a fantastical character in various guises and that has been reproduced and transformed several times over. In its constant reproduction the character has become genderless and existentially ambivalent. Drawing the character by hand, Amoraless performs a type of alchemy, making personal the resulting images. Scaled back to a set of colourful lines, referencing the onscreen depiction of images, the careful placement of pencil to paper infuses the character with the personal touch of the artist. Amoraless literally draws himself back into the story of the picture.

The drawings also speak of our current use of image. Continuously posted and reposted within an online vacuum, images begin to exist purely for their own sake, emphasizing only themselves. The how and why of an image's existence slowly becomes a faint memory, that ultimately becomes separated from form. Amoraless comments on our current existential and political situation and tries to claim back the image from mass depersonalisation.

The array of similar yet unique forms that populate the wall of the bakery mimic the multitudinous flickering screens that populate our world and the visual character of contemporary communication. In their analogue depiction, however, Amoraless reclaims the image and puts himself centre stage. *Meme Animism* addresses the value of artistic authorship and agency and asks us to re-evaluate the digital representations we scroll past daily.

Amoraless' solo show – The Factory - will open at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (NL), on November 23, 2019 and run until May 17, 2020.

Carlos Amoraless studied in Amsterdam at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (1996–97) and Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten (1992–95). Some of his most important exhibitions include: Axioms for Action, MUAC- Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, Ciudad de México, México (2018); Herramientas de trabajo, MAMM-Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín, Colombia (2017); Prelude, Bellas Artes Projects Outpost, Manila, Philippines (2017); Carlos Amoraless, Turku Art Museum, Finland (2016); We Will See How Everything Reverberates, as part of The Dual Year of the United Kingdom and Mexico, Turner Contemporary, Margate (2015). Amoraless represented Mexico during the 57th Venice Biennial. His work has been part other biennials such as the 10th Shanghai Biennale, China (2015); 2 and 8 Berlin Biennial (2001 and 2014); Sharjah Biennial 11, United Arab Emirates (2013); The 12th and 10th Bienal de la Habana, La Habana, Cuba (2015 and 2009); 5th SeMA Biennale Mediacity Seoul, South Korea (2008); 2nd Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art (2007).