

MARK MURPHY : SCRIBBLE 08

ARTISTIC INSPIRATION AND FINE ART RESOURCE

3.14.2010

Hugo Crosthwaite : Brutal Beauty



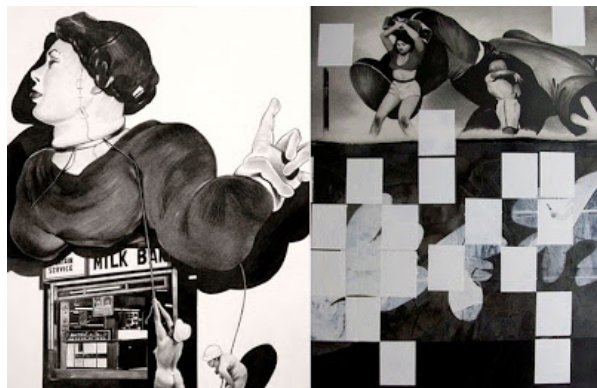
Untitled, New York #1 : 2007 : Graphite and Charcoal on Paper : Details

The San Diego Museum of Art (SDMA) in Balboa Park offered a new dimension in artistic programming as they reserved their main gallery wall for contemporary artist, Hugo Crosthwaite to create, render and paint a new painting for the museum's permanent collection. Hugo delivered an exception piece entitled, "La Cola de dos Ciudades," ("A Tale of Two Cities") inspired by the duality of daily life shared between Tijuana and San Diego.

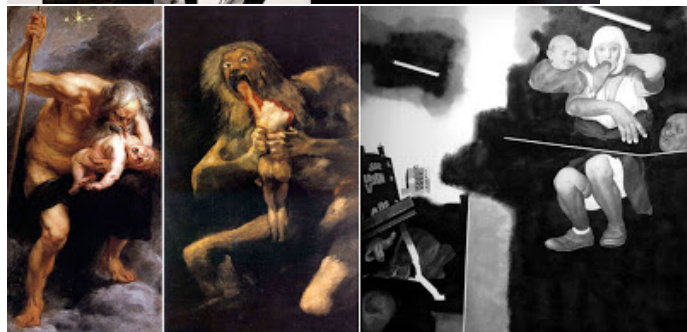


On Sunday, March 14, 2010 Hugo delivered an inspirational talk, discussing his new work while offering glimpses into his creative process. SDMA shared their boardroom, filled to capacity, as Amy Galpin, (Project Curator for American Art), proudly introduced Hugo and shared, "Hugo brought a great energy to the museum..." The audience experienced inspirational energy, as the artist presented the transformation of his painting over two short weeks up and to its final completion earlier in the day.

Hugo Crosthwaite : Tattoo Boy : 9" x 12" (L) and Jack Kirby (R)



Hugo's process for creating "La Cola de dos Ciudades" was the result of constructing a mural piece directly onto the wall's surface in a pop-up gallery space in a Brooklyn warehouse in 2009. The experience was freeing, as Hugo began composing pieces for the overall composition, he moved across the space and then back, searching for visual narrative as charcoal, ink and graphite were applied to the wall's surface. The piece was completed and Hugo was proud to present this new found work. Shortly after the exhibition had closed the vacant space was turned over to a new tenant. Hugo's work was immediately painted over by contractors leaving Hugo



with a sense of loss. The Wranglers and Balloon Pull Deconstructed : 2009 : Graphite and Charcoal on Panel : 12" x 9"

Hugo's heart-felt experience prompted a new wall work in 2009 at the Pierogi 2000 gallery in New

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York. He decided to construct and then deconstruct a new wall painting, “Hair of my Cheney Chin Chin” (144” x 366”). Again, Hugo moved throughout the gallery space, rendering irreverent characters often found in a Tijuana Bible* comic book. And as Hugo’s exhibit “Escape Rates : Escaparates” came to a close the mural had to be painted over, but this time Hugo wanted to do it.

Peter Paul Rubens : “Saturn” : 1686 : Oil on Linen : Museo del Prado, Madrid Spain
 Goya : “The Black Paintings SATURN” or “Saturn Devouring his Son” : 1820 – 1823 :
 Oil on plaster 57 1/2” x 32 3/4” : Museo del Prado, Madrid Spain
 Hugo Crosthwaite : “Twins” : 2007 : 72” x 72” : Graphite and Charcoal on Canvas



This process became a great new discovery, as Hugo deconstructed the mural by adding a grid of white squares over the mural. During this five-day process he meticulously and mechanically masked off squares—painting them in with white paint. Hugo isolated key details of his composition and invited the

viewer to imagine their own perspective to occupy the empty spaces painted upon the wall. “Hair of my Cheney Chin Chin” (144” x 366”) : Pierogi 2000 Gallery in NY



Moving on to San Diego, Hugo was ready to create a live painting in front of SDMA patrons with the same technique. To prepare, Hugo read “Tales of Two Cities” by Charles Dickens and referenced Goya’s “Black Painting Duel with Cudgels,” Frieda Kahlo’s “The Two Friedas” and celebrated the signature line work of Jack Kirby.

“Hair of my Cheney Chin Chin” deconstruction with grid of white squares until completely painted over



Goya presents two men, possibly brothers, with embedded legs anchored into the ground beneath them. Possibly a fight to the death. It is believed that Goya intended this painting as an allegory of civil war between the Spanish monarchists and liberals. The Black Paintings were painted directly on the walls of Goya’s

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country house outside of Madrid at the age of 74.

Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (March 30, 1746 – April 16, 1828)
The Black Paintings Fight with Cudgels also called Duel with Cudgels 1820 – 1823
Oil on plaster 48 1/4" x 104 1/2" : Prado Museum, Madrid



After returning home from Paris in 1939 and divorcing Rivera, Frida painted a literal split between her two selves during her low period of turmoil and self-doubt. On the right is the Mexican Frida in traditional tehuana dress and on the left is European Frida in a colonial white dress.

Frida Kahlo (July 6, 1907—July 13, 1954) featuring “The Two Fridas” (1939-1940)
Photo by Nickolas Muray



Hugo’s live performance delivered a graphic contrast between two cities, Tijuana on left and San Diego on right, concrete on left and grass on right, lucha libre on the left and superheroes on the right but bound of a single tail, possibly of a burro on the left met with a jack ass on the right. The opposing figures featured in “La Cola de dos Ciudades” represent a self likeness of the same artist in two opposing cultures. The central figures are placed amongst political baggage and violent

circumstance riddling the final composition.



Hugo Crosthwaite, currently living in New York, was raised in Tijuana and practiced rendering the small details of paintings, comics and photographs as a child. His father offered copies of “The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri” and “Don Quixote de la Mancha,” by Miguel de Cervantes to his son. Both volumes were invaluable to Hugo as they featured masterful illustrations by Gustave Doré which offered him constant inspiration and motivation to pursue the arts.

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La Cola de dos Ciudades : 2010 : Graphite : Ink : Paint : Charcoal : (Detail)



French artist, illustrator and sculptor. Doré worked primarily with wood and steel engraving. Hugo loves the beauty of adding a black mark onto a white surface, witness its form, discover its narrative and then deconstruct his painting to invite you in.

Paul Gustave Doré (January 6, 1832 – January 23, 1883)



You can see Hugo Crosthwaite's work in the upcoming "Survey Select" exhibition to be held in San Diego, July 15 through August 28, 2010. Hugo will be one of 60 fine artists featured in a curated exhibition by Mark Murphy. Special thanks to Pierette Van Cleve for making this possible.

Untitled, Atlanta : 2005-06 : Graphite : Charcoal on Paper : 156" x 126" (L)

Untitled, New York #1 : 2007 : Graphite and Charcoal on Paper : 84" x 96" (R)



* *Tijuana Bibles (or Eight Pagets)* were illegally distributed comic-book pamphlets during the 1900s. These comic strips were filled with pornographic images of modern day funny paper characters reproduced in black and white. "Tijuana" represented the notion of iniquity while "bible" promoted blasphemous notions. If you seek these out do not be offended as they are racist, sexist and politically incorrect.

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La Cola de dos Ciudades : 2010 : (Detail) : (L)

La Cola de dos Ciudades rendering applied to first edition copy of
"Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens and
presented to SDMA by Hugo Crosthwaite on Sunday, March 14, 2010 : (C)
Kilz 2 Latex was used for the deconstruction : painted squares : (R)

Posted by Mark Murphy at 11:20 PM