

THE ART OF PROVOCATION: CARLOS AIRES

By Rossella Frigerio

His name caused an uproar when in 2005, he created a photographic campaign that portrayed three models wearing the masks of President Bush, Jacques Chirac and Queen Elizabeth engaged in an erotic ménage à trois. Here is an exclusive glimpse into a brilliantly creative mind...



If your work were translated into music, it would sound like something you would hear on a late, balmy summer night with a full moon whilst on the beach with a gorgeous lover and a good cocktail of Bjork, Enrique Morente, Jay Jay Johanson, PJ Harvey, Nina Simone, Bach, Moloko, Yma Sumak, Herbet, Anthony and the Johnsons. All that sprinkled with plenty of Bossa Nova and jazz mixed with some boleros and flamenco on the rocks. As a Spanish, to say that I really love (good) flamenco sounds like a cliché but...the hell with it!! It is an incredible genre of music: it can make me dance and cry at the same time. That is what I seek to provoke with my work.

Continues...

What one thing about yourself would you change?

I would change my bank account for the one of Bill Gates. Only the bank account, of course.

What is the connection between your collection of knives and photographs to their title: Love is in The Air?

"Love is in the Air" is a series of different works which I have produced during the last year. The idea came to mind when I started researching the ways in which violence, disasters, war and other kinds of abject images become a new form of mass entertainment and my impossibility of handling this transformation. "Love is in the Air" deals with the dark side of our daily melodrama: the same finger that switches off the computer screen on which you have just watched horrible images of a war, afterward rings the bell of a private nightclub. These series of works are visual questions about the impossibility to absorb any kind of reality that is not happening somewhere close around us, a reality that we only see on screens or in print. One of the works of this series is the "Inox Edition": engraved knives with images found in the archives of the Foto Museum in Antwerp under the classification of "Catastrophes". I am now working with a professional knife thrower and we are preparing a performance with engraved knives for my next exhibition.

Are your dreams in black and white or colour?

It is funny you should ask because I am a sleepwalker and I normally do not remember my dreams. I am sure they have colours. It is hard for me to believe that someone dreams in black and white as the old televisions and photos because dreams are an extension of our daily life and we see in colours.

The photographers you most admire are Diane Arbus, Nan Goldin, Pierre Molinier, Andres Serrano, Richard Avedon...but my visual love affair goes from painters like Louis-Jacques David, Ingres, Goya, Bacon, Holbein, Hyeronimus Bosh or Miguel Angel to film directors as Fellini, Cassavettes, Almodovar, Buñuel, Hitchcock or Herzog.

What do you love most about your hometown in Ronda?

All the memories, good or bad ones. Ronda is where I lived my childhood and puberty, splashing a lot of hormones everywhere. Since I am quite melancholic, I love how places that can be completely normal for most people are special to me. It is the village I relate to my family.





Of the numerous awards that you have received, which one is closest to your heart?

I loved the recognition that the De Pont Museum (Tilburg, Holland) awarded me because they provided an apartment and atelier for a year and it came at a moment in my life during which I was completely broke. Although I was in one of the most ugly and boring Dutch cities, I had very wild and intense time there.



If you were forced to give up what you do, you would...

I hate the idea of being forced by anything or anybody. I am not into SM games.

What is 'truth'?

That this is your last question. Now how about a gin & tonic in a chiringuito?

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Biographical Notes

1. Born in Ronda, Malaga.
2. His works have been exhibited everywhere from New York to Belgrade.
3. A truly talented individual, he holds a Master in European Arts and Cultures, a PhD in Arts and an MA in Photography.
4. Items from his Love is in the Air "Inox Edition" collection range from €1.500 to €6.000.
5. You may purchase his works through www.aeroplastics.net, www.artextra.co.za and www.galeriajm.com