

PRESS RELEASE



Francisco Medail
From the series Photographies 1930 - 1943
Buenos Aires
Año 2017
Injekt print on fiber paper
20 x 30 cm.
Edition 5 + A/P

FOTOGRAFÍAS 1930 - 1943 | Francisco Medail

Curatorship | Verónica Tell

01.08.17 - 7pm. Opening
01.08.17 - 29.09.17

ROLF ART is pleased to announce the opening of Francisco Medail's individual exhibition entitled, "Fotografías 1930 - 1943", (Photographies 1930 - 1943) with the curatorship of Verónica Tell, on Tuesday, August 1st at 7 pm, at the gallery located in Esmeralda 1353, Buenos Aires, Argentina. The exhibition - free admission - can be visited from Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. until September 29, 2017.

Francisco Medail - Photographies 1930 - 1943 (Entre Ríos, 1991), proposes a hypothesis about the visual regimes that operated in the past in local photography. Medail wonders about the ways in which historical accounts are constructed and why certain points of view tend to crystallize over others, at a given time and place. After three years of research, the artist presents a corpus of more than fifty images that call for us from their formal resolution and content: an essay on the so-called Infamous Decade, a dark stage that begins with the first civic-military coup of the XX century in the country and marks the return of the conservatives to power.

This photographic project that starts from the work of archiving and the practice of appropriationism, through a process of search, editing and resignification of documentary material, is solved in a critical visual essay, which discovers a forgotten historiography, unveiling an aesthetic from a time which is foreign to him.

Francisco Medail - Photographies 1930 - 1943

(Excerpt form the curatorial text)

Francisco Medail - Photographies 1930-1943 is a hypothesis - or a historiographic provocation -. Medail's visual essay plays with the possibility of rewriting a page in the history of Argentine photography. While local artistic historiography of the 1930 ́s hoisted the modern proposals of Coppola, Stern, Saderman, Heinrich, and the more conservative debtors of the aesthetics of photoclubism, it neglected public and private photographs that ran through other channels, with uses and operations outside the field of art. These form an immense iconographic corpus in which historians, editors, journalists, essayists are eventually immersed in search of visual documents of the past.

Medail's proposal involves crossing both spheres and carrying out an aesthetic search on most heterogeneous sets of photographs, as they were frequently formed with images from different sources -institutional, journalistic, amateur-, generated for different purposes. Thus, what Francisco Medail - Photographies 1930-1943 puts on the scene is, in short, the old discussion art versus - document updated to the age of appropriationism.

By placing the focus on the aesthetic, the external conditions of the photographic practice were voluntarily diluted (contractual situation or original intentions of the photographers, which, on the other hand, we could not know given the effacement of the names in most cases). Instead, the search was focused on the forms that are paired with the ways of production: quick shots of scenes or of events also fleeting and incidental or occurred between the tumult and agitation. Thus, Medail brings forth an aesthetic rooted in the variables of the photographic language itself: moved images, out of focus, seemingly unsuccessful frames, shots captured in passing.

Medail's proposal is a historiographic provocation stylistic rather than documentary terms, since the exhibition builds a possible chronicle of Buenos Aires in the 1930s. Historical events are combined with daily records to build a mosaic on the period of delivery, corruption and fraud that began in 1930 with the first civic-military coup of the century in Argentina. But, at the same time, the construction of this iconographic corpus of the Infamous Decade was guided by the search for certain aesthetic qualities and brings to light an internal compositional coherence, a possible style of author or period that, however, we know apocryphal.

It is noteworthy that this is the first work in which Medail is introduced in historical archives to interrogate contexts, forms and senses, proposing the time variable for the re-contextualization of the images.

Hence, Francisco Medail - Photographs 1930-1943 defies the idea of author and chronology, and at the same time, he makes a reference to the titles of the books published by the Antorchas Foundation in the 1990s, fundamental in the historiography of Argentine photography.

Verónica Tell

Francisco Medail b.1991, Entre Ríos

The work of Francisco Medail can be understood as an intertwine of questions about photography, about its possibilities as an unstable place of production of meaning and about its expansions in the media.

Medail does not take pictures. The central operation that runs his work is to design new assemblies and locations for a universe of existing images, exploring the setbacks and edges of their circulation. In this way he inquires into the precariousness of its archiving, the fragility of its history and destiny. These are images that inhabit one space-another, summoned according to systematic criteria either in the formal level or in a discursive one.

Medail exercises the transition of a production scattered in peripheral scenarios towards the aesthetic regime of the art. In this passage of meanings, the central questions of his poetics deal with the present visual production of identities, subjectivities and representations. The methodical affectation of existing images seeks to challenge the current forms of production of visuals and their capture and treatment by social discourses.

Francisco Medail prepared himself in clinics and seminars with Gabriel Valansi, Eduardo Gil, Pablo Siquier and others. In 2014 he was selected to participate in Proyecto PAC, an educational program promoted by the Gachi Prieto gallery and since 2013 he is a student of the degree in Cultural Management (UNDAV). In 2016 he was awarded the Scholarship for the Creation of the National Fund for the Arts. His work has been selected in numerous awards, among them the Paul Huf Award (Selection, 2016), PHMuseum New Generation Prize (Honorable Mention, 2016), AMMEC Award Contemporary Photography (Selection, 2014 and 2016), Curriculum Zero (Ruth Benzacar, 2011). Since the year 2015 he performs as artistic director of Buenos Aires Photo, an art fair specializing in photography. He is currently represented by Rolf Art gallery.

From very early on he has participated in collective exhibitions, specialized awards and several fairs abroad, which include artBO, ARCOmadrid and Paris Photo. His work is part of public museums and private collections.

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Rolf Art, located in Buenos Aires and founded by Florencia Giordana Braun in 2009, focuses on contemporary Latin American visual arts. The gallery features works exploring photographic media and its boundaries. The selection of artists considers pieces with an inextricable union between critical density and aesthetic values, the liaison (always in tension) between formal strategies and conceptual depth. The curatorial profile of the gallery challenges the social, political and economical context of artistic production and understand it as a determining factor for art's interpretation. We are committed to a select group of contemporary established Latin American artists, promoting them on national and international basis. We support their artistic production together with editorial and audiovisual projects. The gallery's mission is to promote the appreciation of contemporary art and to push the boundaries of visual arts.

For more information do not hesitate to contact Camila Knowles
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