

PRESS RELEASE

EUGENIO MERINO: ALWAYS SHAMELESS

JUNE 12 - JULY 12, 2014

UNIX Gallery is pleased to announce “Always Shameless” an exhibition of new work by Eugenio Merino. The exhibition opens amidst the artist’s ongoing legal battles to defend freedom of speech in Spain after being sued over his controversial sculptures depicting dictator Francisco Franco (1892-1975). His highly politicized works will be on display at UNIX Gallery New York, 532 W 24th St, from June 12th - July 12th, 2014. An opening reception will be held on Thursday June 12th, 2014 from 6:00 - 8:00 PM.

“Always Shameless” is the culmination of a project Merino began in 2011 with Always Franco, a life sized sculpture of uniformed Spanish dictator Francisco Franco preserved in a Coca Cola refrigerator. The Fundación Nacional Francisco Franco, an organization dedicated to preserving Franco’s legacy, quickly sued the artist over the sculpture as well as for a second sculpture the artist created of the dictator. Merino went to trial twice to defend his freedom of speech and won both cases.



Logo created as a collaboration between Merino and graffiti artist NOAZ

Despite the legal setbacks, the artist has continued his series of sculptures of political figures for the exhibition. The title of the show “Always Shameless” is a play on the 1993 Coca Cola slogan “Always”. Merging the political nature of the artist’s sculptures with the branding of a universally recognized product brings these ultimately dark and poignant works into the more accessible forum of popular culture.

Merino’s work undoubtably reflects his struggle as a politically active and controversial artist. Speaking directly to the issues of manipulation and control throughout the 21st century, his works challenge the artistic and social limits his subjects have set upon their respective societies. Their legacies have been preserved simply through our participation in keeping their reigns alive; “it seems incredible that General Franco is still oppressing artists in Spain from beyond the grave”(Jonathan Jones, The Guardian).

Born in 1975 in Spain, Eugenio Merino graduated from the Complutense University of Madrid. Coverage of Merino’s work can be found worldwide in publications such as ArtNewspaper, The Telegraph, and Art Tribune. He has had numerous solo and group exhibitions and has participated in a variety of art fairs, including Volta NY, Volta Basel, ARCO (Madrid), Art Brussels, FIAC (Paris), Armory Show, Arte Fiera (Bologna), Art BO (Bogota), Zona Maco (Mexico), Art Miami and has exhibited in the MOCA Museum of Taipei and the B.P.S.22 in Charleroi (Belgium).

Eugenio Merino lives and works in Madrid, Spain.