

Eugenio Merino

Sons Of Capital

October 20 - November 12, 2016



Face Wash (detail)
Industrial dishwasher and commemorative plates
32 x 23 x 26 in | 82 x 58 x 66.5 cm, 2016

UNIX Gallery is pleased to present “Sons Of Capital,” a solo show by Spanish artist Eugenio Merino at our 532 West 24th Street location in New York. This marks Merino’s third exhibition with the gallery. “Sons Of Capital” opens with a public reception on October 20 from 6 - 8 pm and runs for three weeks.

The new body of work features the provocative artist’s signature use of hyperrealist sculpture, installation, and conceptualism to illustrate the inequitable effects of blind, ubiquitous capitalism through satire and metaphor. “Sons Of Capital” develops a discourse about the distribution of power in society today, where only a few decide for many people who must accept a state of submission. The artist’s work becomes a cry for change, recalling Plato’s cave, to push through and overcome the fear or preconceived notions of security espoused by selfish authoritarians who claim to have others best interests in mind. Merino calls out and focuses on those few who lead, or have led, the world, from a socially acceptable and, even, legitimate stance.

Such a system germinates and feeds leaders who are elected only for their own benefit. It is a (self) delusion to think that we can be part of decision-making with our ballots. The real truth is that those decisions have been already made and our votes are just an act to satisfy the masses. Tackling these themes of politics, religion, and socioeconomic standards, with the aim of satirically questioning their validity, Merino presents *Pandora’s Ballot Box*, a methacrylate

ballot box containing ballot papers and the head of Adolf Hitler. Known for his Hyperrealist sculptures – including dictators, politicians, artists, and other institutionalized figureheads – *Pandora’s Ballot Box* is among the artist’s most poignant and controversial works to date. It should not be forgotten that Hitler used democracy – using a strategy comparable to a coup d’état – to rise to power. As such, *Pandora’s Ballot Box* is a nod to the growing rise of extremism in Europe and the United States through representative elections. The resonance of this work is further accentuated when viewed with *Damaged Goods*, a life-size sculpture of Donald Trump’s head, complete with his signature hairstyle, detailed to every strand.

Merino posits that together politicians change, as the world evolves, but the majority of the social class struggles is still the same. “The best slave is the one who thinks he is free.” This quote by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe reiterates Merino’s idea in the artwork *Face Wash*. Mixing elements of *objet trouvé* and sardonic conceptualism, the artist loads commemorative plates featuring American presidents into an industrial washing machine. Merino speaks of power, capitalism and, of course, of submissive automatons, exploring the decades-long proliferative collusion between Big Business and Big Government. Replete with political imagery and motifs, Merino presents a contemporary cautionary tale rooted in the denial of individual freedoms and democratic right under the guise of “managing society” by a new and more opaque fascism. Moreover, *Face Wash* addresses the interchangeability of politicians. Like the plates that bear their portraits, these leaders are mere ornamentation; puppets for a larger apparatus in which both they and average citizens get wrapped up. Merino presents a contemporary cautionary tale rooted in the denial of individual freedoms and democratic right under the guise of “managing society” by a new and more opaque fascism. There is a cycle of washing away the same sociopolitical issues that burden our society, just to repeat and further these mistakes.

Eugenio Merino (b. 1975, Madrid, Spain). Eugenio Merino graduated from the Complutense University of Madrid. He has had numerous solo and group exhibitions including MOCA Taipei and the B.P.S.22 in Belgium. In October 2015, Merino made his US museum debut in the Station Museum of Contemporary Art’s, *Corpocracy*. The exhibition also featured works by Ron English. He has participated in a variety of art fairs, including The Armory Show, FIAC (Paris), ARCO (Madrid), Zona MACO, Volta, Art Miami, and Art 16 London. Eugenio Merino currently lives and works in Madrid, Spain.

“Sons Of Capital” runs from October 20 through November 12, 2016 and the gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For all press inquiries and to RSVP to the preview, contact Robert Berry at 212-209-1572 or robert@unixgallery.com.