

Ricardo Gonzalez

The Shape I'm In

January 8 - February 12, 2022



Asya Geisberg Gallery is proud to present "The Shape I'm In", the third solo exhibition of New York-based artist **Ricardo Gonzalez**. As boundaries become increasingly blurred, work infiltrates home, and life cannot but sway to the beat of variants, the title of this exhibition might suggest our consequent state of mind. It also refers to the shapes with which the characters in Gonzalez's painting interact, or their cognition of their own bodies. Gonzalez's work has always thrived in the murk of figures coming into and out of abstract playfulness. Arms, legs, or teeth are conjured out of a line, a border, or color shift, erased and redrawn, with a face or finger having equal verve and narrative weight. Each figure is self-aware of its own state of becoming as it confronts the canvas edge, contorting its limbs in direct response, or even running in and out of the picture plane. With a honed reductive yet expressive drawing style, Gonzalez's bodies, no matter how fragmented, maintain their emotional charge: ecstatic, angry, or exuberant, where even a shoelace's wattage outshines its mundanity.

Gonzalez's gestural use of line and interest in charcoal drawings have made the interplay of drawing and painting a connective line throughout his work. In this series, he stays faithful to the basic elements of painting - shape, color, line - while becoming more of a Pygmalion of paint, and bringing the charcoal line directly onto the canvases. In the series of "portraits" in the show, the figures are reborn from the charcoal drawings of past exhibitions. A dark gestural ground surrounds a sinister, paper-colored character, his form and features outlined in charcoal. His grin is a mixture of glee and danger, another familiar motif for Gonzalez. In "Inside and Out", a super-sized figure holds a rectangle, perhaps a painting, with each intersection of figure and "painting" carved thickly, even impossibly slicing through a hand. "Double Happiness 1" encapsulates two paintings - the abstract Mondrian-esque lighter section and a darker portion with a sinewy figure scrunched by its borders, but directly addressing his neighbor on the other side - a nod to how impossible it is to ever force a true binary system of either/or into these two veins of art.

"The Shape I'm In" shows off the artist's multiple strategies - a cat's sinuous tail finds an echo in a nearby painting's abstract squiggle, which itself could be part of a Suprematist riff, its vaguely primary colors suggestive of many a Modernist master. The work is both self-referential and circular, and unabashedly a paean to earlier Expressionists, either from a century ago, Ab-Ex's heyday, or the 80s Neo-Expressionists, an undercurrent of homage that never supersedes Gonzalez's idiosyncrasies. In "Cats Times Numbers", four cats stand on each canvas edge, as if on a spinning record, on top of a blackboard-like green with nonsensical numbers and scribbled words, as though the teacher has gone and left the kids to play. Gonzalez preserves this fascination with the joy of figuration, mark-making, and stream-of-consciousness scrawls. A perpetual kid in a candy shop of painting, providing just the treat we need right now.

Ricardo Gonzalez was born in Mexico City and lives and works in New York. He received an MFA from New York University, and his BFA at New England School of Art & Design, Boston, MA and Madrid, Spain. He has exhibited in numerous venues in New York, Boston, Miami, Berlin, Mexico, and Belgium. Recent exhibitions include Daniela Elbahara Gallery, Mexico City, Galeria Alegria, Madrid, PEANA Projects, Monterrey, Mexico, and Left Field Gallery, San Luis Obispo, CA. He is a recipient of the Martin Wong Scholarship Award in Painting, and his work has been reviewed in the Wall Street Journal, Time Out New York, Art F City, and Pas un Autre.



Ricardo Gonzalez
Inside and Out, 2021
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas
84h x 65w in



Ricardo Gonzalez
Wanderer, 2021
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas
57h x 46w in