



GALEAÍA ESPACIO MÍNIMO



LARISSA BATES
Snap and Go

From May 19th to July 22nd, 2011

Opening: Thursday May 19th, 2011 at 8 p.m.



The gallery **Espacio Mínimo** closes 2010-2011 season with the first solo show in Spain of **LARISSA BATES**. Titled ***Snap and Go***, the show groups together a representative selection of her latest pictorial works. American born in Costa Rica, **Larissa Bates** work focuses on the critique of gender roles, particularly the masculine one, and the study of colonial policies, with emphasis on the relations between Costa Rica and the USA.

In her paintings a repeating cast of characters play out psychological dramas connected to families, care giving, and power. Investigation of gender roles is a central theme in these works, with a particular emphasis on social constructions of masculinity. The main protagonist of the narrative is the *Mother Man* character, depicted as a wrestler who embodies qualities that are very nurturing in addition to being athletic, heroic and noble. The *Mother Men* strive for pacifism, and often engage in wrestling with one another.

The topic of colonialism is another theme central to the paintings. *Chiquita Banana Girls*, who appear of the in her work, are seen carrying fruit through the landscapes. Bates is the great-granddaughter of George P. Chittenden, who was the vice president of the United Fruit Company, which controlled the banana trade in Costa Rica, from 1925 to 1932. The United Fruit Company brought schools, railroads, and industry to Costa Rica. But under complex circumstances. They implemented institutionalized racism, as workers of color were banned from the company. UFC was notorious for abusive labor practices and exploitation of the Costa Rican citizens and their land rights. As a descendant of both the colonized and the colonizers, Bates' paintings explore the interdependence of these two groups.



Influences from diverse sources form these small sized paintings (on panel, canvas or paper) of strange appearance and of great visual appeal. Carried out with impeccable technique the paintings invite to close and detailed observation. The mise-en-scène takes place in symbolic landscapes where formal influences, such as Byzantine iconography and Persian miniatures, are easy to recognize in the use of gold leaf, in the flat and shiny colors –like in an enameled work-, or in the meticulous drawing technique. However, the iconography is ludicrous and disturbing, very eclectic, with influences coming too from contemporary sources such as the Ballet Russe, Paul Cadmus, Trenton-Doyle Hancock or Amy Cutler.

LARISSA BATES (Burlington –Vermont-, 1981) lives and Works in New York. BA from the Hampshire College, MA her work is internationally exhibited since 2004 in galleries and art fairs.



For further information or images, please, do not hesitate to contact the gallery