



DC.es: Washington Store by Jesús Madriñán



Jesús Madriñán is the third guest of DC.es, a project where five Spanish photographers from the Spanish Academy in Rome share their gazes of Washington through their lenses — gazes as personal, singular and unique as the city itself.

The third work within DC.es reflects the work of Spanish photographer Jesús Madriñán. In Washington Store, on view at the Former Residence, Madriñán explores the use of dating apps and, in particular, the one that brands itself as “the world’s leading dating app for the LGBTQ community.”

WASHINGTON STORE

My main line of work has to do with identity from a generational and biographical perspective, recognizing the importance of alterity, and my work is framed in the need to understand the reality that surrounds me. A process of positive disintegration, in which the estrangement from the surrounding environment becomes a powerful catalyst for creation.

Through my projects I try to reflect and study how different artificial contexts (both physical and virtual) can play an important role in the development of identity. Afterhours clubs, nightclubs or social networks are some of the most important of those contexts, and all of them are common spaces for interaction which are particularly linked to my generation.

On this occasion, with Washington Store, I decided to explore the use of dating apps and, in particular, the one that brands itself as

VISUAL ARTS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Wed, June 28–
Thu, November 30, 2023

Venue

Former Residence of the Ambassadors of Spain, 2801 16th St NW, Washington, DC 20009

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Admission

Free. Open during scheduled events, and by appointment. Book your visit from Monday to Friday (except holidays and special events days), from 10 am to 3 pm, at contact@spainculture.us.

Credits

Presented by the Cultural Office of the Embassy of Spain in Washington, D.C.



“the world’s leading dating app for the LGBTQ community.” The process of creating a digital identity is particularly symptomatic in this app, as it promotes the development of an objectifying view of the digital others and, at the same time, a self-objectification construct, whether consciously or not, which represents the user in the virtual space.

Based on this reflection, and bearing in mind Bauman’s analysis of the fragility of human bonds in present times, I decided to invite as many app users as possible to meet me in an old warehouse in the city. The meeting took place on the same day and at the same time, with a view to capturing a large collective portrait.

The idea was to bring together in a specific physical place a group of strangers who usually share the same virtual space and who, at the same time, are worthy representatives of the social reality of the time and place they live in: Washington, D.C.

And of course, our meeting point was not chosen by chance. A place to store goods and supplies, and to create a collection of portraits which explore the construction of identity in the age of contact apps and reflect on their use and impact. A generational story in the age of modernity and liquid love. The snapshot of a moment in time through its protagonists.

—Jesús Madriñán

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jesús Madriñán (Santiago de Compostela, 1984) uses large-format analogue photography to reinterpret and modernize the portrait as an artistic genre. Thus, his work stems from the subversion of studio photography, going beyond its usual parameters to feed on the paradox derived from using traditional and meticulous techniques in inevitably spontaneous and ungraspable situations. This contradiction gives birth to series such as *Good Night London* (2011), *Boas Noites* (2013), *Dopo Roma* (2016), and *I Am Light* (2019). The outcome is a generational portrait in which values such as youth, diversity and tolerance prevail.

Jesús Madriñán’s career counts with a number of individual exhibitions such as *I Am Light* at Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, *Mil noches y una noche* at Centre del Carme Cultura Contemporània in Valencia, *El tiempo revelado* at Centro de Arte Alcobendas Photoespaña, and the exhibitions dedicated to his series *Good Night London* at the Cultural Centre Kavlin de Punta del Este, Uruguay, and at the Spanish Cultural Centers in Mexico D.F. and Montevideo. He has also taken part in festivals and art fairs such as *Paris Photo*, *ARCO*, *Unseen Amsterdam* or the International Photography Awards in New York.

He combines his main work in portrait with active teaching and with contributions to the commercial field. He has worked as an associate teacher in Universidad Autónoma del Caribe, Colombia, and he collaborates with *The New York Times*, *TIME*, *ABANCA*, *Marie Claire* and the advertising agency Shackleton.



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