



For Immediate Release | March 2016
Contact: Cultural Office, Embassy of Spain
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Washington D.C.- **SPAIN arts & culture** presents at the Former Residence of the Ambassadors of Spain in Washington D.C. "**Spanish Illustrators: The Color of Optimism**", featuring the works of the most relevant contemporary illustrators in our country. Curated by journalist and cultural manager **Mario Suárez**, the exhibition aims to discover and gathers a generation of talented creators who frequently contribute to national and international publications, galleries, museums and popular brands. Suárez has selected 28 groundbreaking artists such as **Paula Bonet, Ricardo Cavolo, Carla Fuentes, Gabriel Moreno, Silvia Prada and Paco Roca**, among others.

The strong tradition of Spanish illustration has been an important asset to art history and continues to be significant in both the art industry and in the media. Some of the great names in art history, Goya, Picasso and Dalí, were distinguished Spanish illustrators and engravers who prompted the development of this artistic discipline making it one of the essential foundations of fine arts. After **Mario Suárez**: *"The importance of illustrations also increased in Spain throughout 19th and 20th centuries, with magazines such as El Museo Universal (1857 and 1869) and Blanco y Negro (1891-2005), a weekly illustrated publication that included articles about everyday life and customs, literature, and culture by some of the greatest names of the 19th century."*

Spanish illustrators continued to sign the headings of international magazines throughout the 20th century, but it was not until the 1990s that they achieved worldwide fame that has followed them ever since. *"Mariscal and his work for the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Max and his legendary cover for The New Yorker magazine, Ana Juan and her numerous collaborations in The New Yorker, and Jordi Labanda and his works for Wallpaper, Vogue USA, and The New York Times Sunday Magazine, have been central figures in the world of illustration in the last thirty years,"* continues Suárez.

The illustrators participating in this exhibition are: **Raúl Allen, Marta Altés, Óscar del Amo, Iban Barrenetxea, Paula Bonet, Mikel Casal, Ricardo Cavolo, César Fernández Arias, Carla Fuentes, Óscar Giménez, Javier Jubera, Violeta López, Sean Mackaoui, Merino, Gabriel Moreno, Santiago Morilla, María Pascual, Silvia Prada, Sonia Pulido, Paco Roca, Conrad Roset, Aitor Saraiba, María Simavilla, Eva Solano, Iván Solbes, Robert Tirado, Luis Úrculo, y Noemí Villamuza.**

About the Curator

MARIO SUÁREZ (Madrid, 1978) is a curator and journalist. Suárez is in charge of the production and coordination of the art section for the latest edition of MULAFEST, the Urban Tendencies festival in Madrid (IFEMA). In addition, he is the co-founder of Gunter Gallery and is the author of the books, "Ilustradores Españoles," "Cocina Indie," "Los nombres esenciales del arte urbano y de graffiti español" y "Cocina Pop". As a journalist, he was a lifestyle director at magazines such as Rolling Stone and Dominical. He was once a member of the newspaper ADN and the magazine, ZERO. In the past, he has participated in 4 editions of Premios Príncipe de Asturias. Currently, Suárez publishes his works in GQ and El País.

About the Artists

RAÚL ALLEN

Valladolid, 1979 www.raulallen.com

Since he was young, Allen has received recognition from institutions such as The Mapfre Foundation, The Art Institute of Boston, the Society of Illustrators in Los Angeles and New York. Thanks to a mixture of futuristic comics, classic drawings, and anime psychology, Allen is looked upon as a creator of history and moments. *"I see the world as millions of lines and shapes that define personalities and situations; I am passionate about the tradition in sketching, the way paint is mixed with language and the experimentation with new technologies."* His work has been published in Playboy, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, Rolling Stone, GQ, Maxim, Foreign Policy, El Duende, Madriz, Público, and editorials like Edebe, Oxford, Teide, Anaya, Random House, SM and Pearson Education, among many others.



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Barcelona, 1982 www.martaltes.com

The naive style of Marta Altés gestures to the adult reader in each of the expressions of her characters. *"I am still learning, therefore, I'm still developing my style, which is defined as simple, fresh and easy,"* she says. Since working on illustrations in 2011, she has published several books in the UK and Spain. Her book, 'No!' (Child's Play) has won international awards such as Read It Again! and the Nottingham Children's Book Award. She always works with watercolor, silkscreen, crayons and Photoshop.

ÓSCAR DEL AMO

Valladolid, 1974 www.oscardelamo.com

His illustrations display fantasy and surrealism. He is influenced by comics and animation, which is seen in his unique techniques in his work. *"I think the illustrations, the matter to resolve and the techniques used depends on the graphite and oil."* This is seen in his illustrations for editorials, publicity agencies and other communication mediums. His grand use of color, textures and environment are his most notable features.

IBAN BARRENETXEA

Elgoibar, Guipúzcoa, 1973 ibanbarrenetxeablogspot.com

Since 2010, Barrenetxea has worked in the world of illustration. He has published five books, has received the Euskadi de ilustración de obra literaria Award in 2011 and the Placa de la Bienal de Ilustración Bratislava in 2010. He defines his style as "elegant." His pencil works is often described by viewers as pictorial and dreamlike.

PAULA BONET

Vila-real, Castellón, 1980 www.paulabonet.com

Bonet's style combines oil with etching techniques. Her impulsive character and patience to these techniques, coupled with the difficulty of integrating images with text fragments has created a change in oils, copper, wood and gouges by watercolors and ink. Therefore, the results are faster and more direct. Her work is a sensation online. She now receives orders from Mexico, Hong Kong and Paris.

MIKEL CASAL

San Sebastián, 1965 www.mikelcasal.com

Casal has published his works in mediums such as, El Correo, ABC, Publico, Vanity Fair, Clarin, Que Leer, El Comercio de Lima, SM, Actar, Maclillan, Anaya and Blur Ediciones. In 2006, 3 of his works were selected for the catalog World Press Cartoon. In 2010, he was featured in the book "The Exquisite Book" (Chronicle Books), along with other artists from around the world. In 2011, he received the silver medal for illustration by the Society for New Design. His play has been adapted to the film, "La isla del cangrejo," winner of the Goya in 2001. His work is appreciated for its daily anecdote and irony while using the technique where the color prominently focuses on its surroundings instead of its characters.

RICARDO CAVOLO

Salamanca, 1982 www.ricardocavolo.com

His career path changed when Cirque du Soleil chose him to reinterpret the poster of one of his shows. Since then, Cavolo has become one of the most renowned illustrators in Europe's underground culture. His works have appeared in publications such as Rolling Stone or Yorokobu. He has published books for publishers like Lunewerg, SM, Peripheral, and Two Dollar Radio. His paintings have been featured in Madrid, Montreal and Mexico. He has also worked on album covers and posters for labels like Gran Derby Records Music and Boa. Cavolo uses color, stories and a unique style to mix tribal tattoos and magical realism.



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CÉSAR FERNÁNDEZ ARIAS

Caracas, Venezuela, 1952 www.cesarfernandezarias.com

Fernández Arias has spent his entire career as an illustrator in Madrid, and regularly publishes his work in *El País Semanal*. In 2000, he received the *Premio Nacional de Ilustración* for '100 greguerías ilustradas' (*Media Vaca*). Fernández has worked with drawings, sculptures and cardboard. He defines his style as "close to the historical avant-garde and constructivist" His style creates a unique identity in Spanish illustration. He usually works in pencil, ink or marker.

CARLA FUENTES

Valencia, 1986 www.littleisdrawing.com

Carla Fuentes' style is similar to Egon Schiele in their complex portraits, full of personality, intimidation and representation of human loneliness. She has published her works, which she defines as "linear, clean, with light touches of color and far from representing reality", in magazines like *Vanidad*, *Nylon*, *Art Rocker* and *Nero*. She works with ink color, gouache and graphite. She has designed Pollock group's image, and has done merchandising for artists such as Russian Red and *La Habitación Roja*. Fuentes' delicate style can be seen in the prints created for fashion brands such as *Kling*, *Pull&Bear* and *Women's Secret*.

ÓSCAR GIMÉNEZ

Barcelona, 1969 www.oscargimenez.com

Giménez defines his style as "*pop-Contem-skull*." Giménez is very involved with music illustration. He has published in journals such as *Rolling Stone*, *Insight Magazine* and *Playboy*, and his clients are companies such as *Universal Music*, *Telecinco* and *Heineker Music Selector*. Dominated by color and defined outline, he captures the psychology of the character being portrayed in the given moment, a moment frozen in the last puff of a cigarette. His works are defined as a neo-popart illustration; fresh, dynamic and direct, with characters from a generation that expresses their life through music.

JAVIER JUBERA GARCÍA

Logroño, 1982 javierjubera.blogspot.com

Despite his young age, his work has been featured in numerous art galleries and exhibition halls. His style involves the use of aquatint, lithography, etching, pencil and the computer. He carefully plans each project, where the composition and the line are the backbone of his works. According to Jubera, "*cleaning delicate and sensitive strokes is the result of my personality and deep humility*."

VIOLETA LÓPIZ

Ibiza, 1980 www.violetalopez.com

López's artwork usually contains humor, provocation, sympathy, fragility and beauty. "Perhaps because that is the person I am and my way of asking whom I am," says López. She has published books with publishers such as *Macmillan*, *Edelvives*, *Anaya*, *Siruela*, *Oxford University Press*, *Kalandraka*, *El Mundo* and *El Expresso*. Her austere style, close to painting and surrealism, has led her to be a finalist for the *CJ Picture Book Award* in 2012. *Las piezas de Violeta*, is described as dreamlike and sensory, while working with a constant color.

SEAN MACKAOUI

Lausana, Suiza, 1969 www.mackaoui.com

Mackaoui's illustrative style is defined as "collage, cut and paste". Since 1995, he is dedicated to illustrating Spain. He has published in *El Mundo*, *Courriere International*, *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *International Herald Tribune* and *El País*. In 2003 he won first prize for Best Book Published in the children's books category from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport for 'Garra de la guerra', by Gloria Fuertes. It is featured in galleries in Mexico, Madrid, Italy, Argentina and France.



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Barcelona, 1962 www.estudiomerino.com

José Luis Merino is considered to be one of the most well-known illustrators in the international publishing industry. His firm has appeared in publications including Los Angeles Times Magazine, The Washington Magazine, The New York Times, The New Yorker, Sunday Telegraph, Harper's Bazaar, Madame Figaro Japan, La Vanguardia, Público, GQ and Elle. His studio has created the design of several newspapers and publications and has received several awards (American Illustration, The Art Directors Club of Europe, Premio Junceda de Ilustración.) His style is positive, colorful, with characters that live, feel and smile. The elegance of the shapes and proportions through an orderly, symbolic and realistic compositions are prominent in his work.

GABRIEL MORENO

Baena, Córdoba, 1973 www.gabrielmoreno.com

Moreno is one of the most famous illustrators around the world. His works have been featured in Wall Street Journal, Sunday Times, Los Angeles Times Magazine, Esquire, GQ, El País Semanal, among others. He defines his style as "*the strength of the line, expressiveness and sensuality, with an update of the traditional techniques, with strong color, but very simple*". His works are traded among large commercial firms, despite being in this sector since May 2007. His pieces are sinuous, that interlock with beings as if they were elements of nature, with a large latent eroticism and a beautiful indefinite stroke.

SANTIAGO MORILLA

Madrid, 1973 www.santiagomorilla.com

Morilla is one of the young Spanish artists. He has published in media such as International Herald Tribune, Sins Entido, Blur, Pias and Siesta. He has collaborated with advertising agencies such as Ogilvy and La Trastienda Comunicación. Morilla was one of the first young illustrators to be invited to Illustration ABC Museum (Madrid). He *usually presents in countries such as Italy and Korea. His work was included twice (2007 and 2010) in the book illustration international Lürze's 200 Best Illustrators Worldwide*. He defines his style as "conceptual but with a focus on an anxiety aesthetic and formal tranquility." His hair is his trademark, causing the viewer a state of anguish humorous surreal.

MARÍA PASCUAL DE LA TORRE

Madrid, 1973 www.pluviam.com

"The pen is the trap I deal with hunting stories and ideas," says Maria Pascual de la Torre, who uses collage, threads, watercolors and cardboard to create her complex artistic universe. She has published in journals such as AR, Nosotras, El Duende and Mía. She is currently the co-director of the Pluviam Studio, where illustration, animation and corporate identity are combined. Her infinite imaginary is present in many books with publishers like Siruela, Thule Ediciones, Edimat Libros and Laberinto. In 1997, when María was the "Premio Nacional Fin de Carrera de Bellas Artes", her creative world was drawn with nostalgia and gorgeous illustrations.

SILVIA PRADA

Ponferrada, León, 1969 www.silviaprada.com

Silvia Prada began illustrating for some of the most influential international magazines of the nineties, Dazed & Confused, Interview and The Face. Her classic and figurative style has made her one of the most respectable pop artists, who works with photography, graphic design and video art, which is highly influenced by the musical culture, art and fashion. She has been published in magazines such as VUsa, Vman, Tokion, Dazed & Confused, Black Book, Fanzine 137 and Candy Magazine. She has also worked with companies such as Nike, Uniqlo, and Stolichnaya. She lives in New York, where she continues working and exhibiting in galleries and museums around the world.



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Barcelona, 1973 soniapulido.blogspot.com/

As an illustrator and interior designer, she is a regular contributor to El País, El País Semanal and Rockdelux. She has worked for publishers such as, Planeta, Treseditores, Sins Sentido, Anaya, Kosmópolis (Centro de Cultura Contemporánea de Barcelona), Club Cultura (FNAC), Barcelona Magazine, Cinemanía, Ling, Calle20, Benzina, NSLM, Woman y Delicatessen, among others. In 1996 she received the first prize of Illustration, Joves Creadors from Barcelona. In 2002, she won first prize in Injuve illustration and in 2007 she was nominated for the Autor Revelación en el Salón del Cómic de Barcelona. In 2008 she was selected in Zürich's Young Illustrators in American Illustrator, and in 2011, she won the Junceda de Ilustración award. She defines her style as *"romantic visual potpourri, and childish."*

PACO ROCA

Valencia, 1969 www.pacoroca.com

Roca is one of the most demanded media illustrators, especially after winning the 2012 Goya Best Adapted Screenplay for the film adaptation of his graphic novel Wrinkles, who also won the same award in the category of Best Animated Film. Roca began publishing in the journal El Víbora, and since then his career has been very prolific. In 2008, he received the Nacional de Cómic Award. He has also been awarded several times in Italy or Japan. Roca published in Babelia, El País Semanal, Rockdelux, Las Provincias, Cinemanía and Efe Eme. Roca defines his style *"within the Franco-Belgian called bright line", and always works with ink pen and digital color."*

CONRAD ROSET

Terrassa, 1984 www.conradroset.com

Drawing has been Roset's passion since his childhood where he would draw with his brother. Years later, he was inspired by women to create las Musas, his most personal collection. After his artwork went viral, he began working for Zara. A year later, he launched as a freelancer and has worked for different brands, advertising agencies and publishers. His work has been featured in galleries and museums such as the MOCA in Virginia, SopkeArt in San Francisco, London Milles in London, Tipos Infames in Madrid, Artevistas and Miscelanea in Barcelona. In addition to his works, Roset works as a professor of illustration at the School of Design in BAU.

AITOR SARAIBA

Talavera de la Reina, Toledo, 1983 www.aitorsaraiba.com

Saraiba is one of the most promising young Spanish artists. In addition to his work with ceramics, performance, photography and textiles, his work as an illustrator is perhaps one of the best known. Saraiba has a unique imagery. His graphic novel 'El hijo del legionari'o (Edicions de Ponent, 2011) is the summary of his prolific career that has led him to exhibit in galleries such as, Mad is Mad, Mutt, Galería Fucarés. *"Mi mayor referencia artística son mis primos pequeños"*, says that Saraiba started selling illustrated fanzines and has come to participate in artistic projects for the museum Thyssen-Bornemisza and the MUSAC (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León).

MARÍA SIMAVILLA

Salamanca, 1983 <http://elblogdepencil.com/tag/maria-simavilla/>

Influenced by illustration and animation of the fifties and sixties, Maria Simavilla is a young designer who has published editorials such as Edelvives and Anaya. Despite having just launched professionally in 2010. *"I like to think that my artwork can create smiles."* She defines her style as full of humor and imagination. Color is the strong element in her works. Simavilla always works in digital, to capture simple, positive and lively reasons. Her illustrations are full of elusive creatures with extreme, naive and optimistic happiness.



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Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 1974 www.evasolanostudio.com

Solano's style is recognizable at the underground art scene. Solano has been published in media such as *Pasajes Design*, *Popshot Magazine*, *Lamono*, *El País*, *Calle 20*. She has worked for companies such as Onitsuka Tiger and CasaDecor. She always uses pencils, markers or watercolors by hand when illustrating: "My style evolves as I research to create characters." Her imagination is complex and uses color to accompany their animate beings, creating a fuzzy boundary between animal and human.

IVÁN SOLBES

Madrid, 1974 www.ivansolbes.com

Since 2002, Solbes has worked as an illustrator for Nobel. In addition to being the illustrator for advertising agencies, Ivan Solbes has published in *El País*, *Wallpaper*, *El Semanal*, *Públic*, *ELR* and *Ilarión*. His style is "metaphorical and visual", 'a pop romanticism', with a dreamlike vision of urban life and some glimpses of humor and childhood memories. His name is part of a generation of illustrators who have incorporated art into publicity.

ROBERT TIRADO

Caracas, Venezuela, 1977 www.roberttiradoart.com

As an illustrator and graphic artist, Robert Tirado has primarily developed his work in Madrid. Tirado's work is inspired by female beauty, fashion and photography. To create his artwork, he mixes digital and manual techniques while incorporating geometry, art and music. He has been published in *Sports Illustrated*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Glamour*, *Bond*, *Mono* and *Playboy*. According to Tirado, "Seize the opportunities offered by new technologies and try to keep the warmth and expression of handmade works, the naturalness of stains and spontaneity in the use of colors and shapes."

LUIS ÚRCULO

Madrid, 1978 www.luisurculo.com

Luis Úrculo defines his style as "anthropological atlas." He has been published in medias such as *El País*, *El Duende*, *NewPapers*, *Rolling Stone* and *Mas Context*. His work has been presented in Lisboa, Málaga, Texas, San Francisco and Madrid. He has also presented his work at international exhibitions such as the XI Bienal de Venecia and ArtBasel. In addition, companies such as Zara, Davidelfin, Absolut, Renault and Philippe Starck have asked for his artwork. By focusing on industrial design and architecture, his allegorical and light stroke style shows a scattered balanced with discreet color presence.

NOEMÍ VILLAMUZA

Palencia, 1971 www.noemivillamuza.com/

Naomi Villamuza defines the way she works as "orchestrated by pencil illustration". Her first story, 'Óscar y el león de correos' (Anaya, 1998) won the Nacional de Literatura Infantil Award (1999). Her pattern always uses a simple, understated, natural painterly style, where the curves of her characters merge with black and white to create ironic worlds and underworlds. She has more than thirty children's books published. She also combines her work as an illustrator with teaching. In 2002, 'De verdad que no podía' (Kókinos, 2001) was the finalist for Nacional de Ilustración Award. In 2007, she received the Junceda al Mejor Libro Ilustrado Award for Adultos for 'El festín de Babette' (Nórdica, 2006).