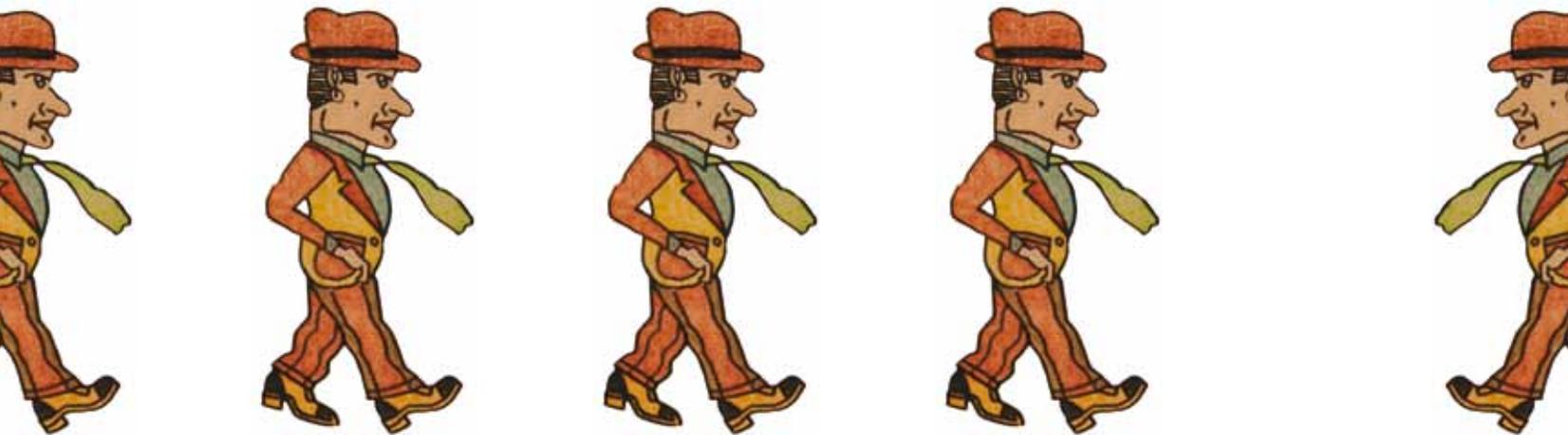


ANTONIO SEGUÍ



OPERA GALLERY



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Embassy of
Argentina
to the U.A.E.

The Argentine Embassy has the distinguished opportunity to continue to build bridges between the peoples of the United Arab Emirates and Argentina via cultural exchanges to help us gain a deeper understanding of the world around us and specifically our nations.

Our societies share the distinction of multiculturalism, and in the case of Argentinas it is the result of successive migratory waves that, since the beginning of the 20th century, contributed to forging a rich and diverse society that can be traced back to various traditions throughout the world.

We hope that this exhibition will not only introduce you to the world renowned Argentinean artist Antonio Seguí, but also appeal to your curiosities on our multi-cultural society in all its expressions, be it visual arts, literature or music.

ANTONIO SEGUÍ

P R E F A C E

2015 definitely marks a number of exciting “firsts” for Opera Gallery Dubai and its artists. In continuing with this movement, we are delighted to announce the first solo show in Dubai for legendary Argentinian artist Antonio Seguí.

Seguí has created a series of paintings specifically for the region for this occasion that pay homage to local customs and attires. The artist’s eminent subject can be seen donning a traditional kandura, gutrah and agal, and strolling alongside palm trees and desert scenery all so familiar to Dubai and its inhabitants.

The timing for this show could not be more appropriate, with Latin America being the continent honored during the prestigious Middle Eastern art fair of Art Dubai.

Opera Gallery invites you to take a stroll with Señor Gustavo, and get lost in Antonio Seguí’s unique universe.

Gilles Dyan
Founder and Chairman
Opera Gallery Group

Sylvain Gaillard
Director
Opera Gallery Dubai





Seguí

Antonio Seguí's fascination with the city, its people and its pulse has been present in his work for the past three decades. Yet to describe him solely as a painter of cities seems to leave out much of what makes the Argentinian painter so enchanting. Repeated in many of Seguí's paintings is the automaton, the 'everyman', an expressionless passerby rendered anonymous amongst the great swarm of individuals trudging alongside of him. His voyeuristic gentleman catapults over the Moulin Rouge, dangles between the Eiffel Tower and the Buenos Aires Obelisk. Always onwards to new adventures, today he strolls along the shores of the Persian Gulf. Every now and then he seems to stand still, quietly meditating on the heartbeat of his surroundings.

The central figure in Seguí's works is the innocuous Señor Gustavo. He attests to the influence of the Argentinian tradition and the exploitation of Buenos Aires's first inhabitants, the legendary *gaucho*, admired in legends not unlike the North American cowboy. Gustavo makes frequent apparitions in Seguí's paintings as a somber hatted character who travels from painting to painting, city to city, as if the eager courier of the artist's message. But what message might that be? Is he merely a symbol of the artist's own multicultural fascination, or is there a darker subtext hiding the misery of existence within a healthy dose of humour and sarcasm?

Conceivably both. Seguí's visual language and social commentary are poignant explorations of man's place in society. Constantly in action, Seguí's figures stroll, run, tiptoe and peer through the labyrinth of their urban metropolis. Hone in on an individual and you may find something of yourself in a longing gaze, a moment's reflection, a spark of productivity. Zoom out and you're confounded by the dramatized fragmentation of the urban landscape, an arbitrary concoction of cookie-cutter people, buildings, and trees.

Parody, human nature's greatest weapon against the tragedies that plague us, plays an integral and enduring role in Seguí's facetious paintings. Influenced by artists such as Diego Rivera and Fernand Léger, Seguí's works are satirical critiques of man both within and outside of society. His visual language translates the incessancy of urban persistence into a man to chuckle at, an absurdity we can identify with. Seguí's *flâneur* is the ultimate urbanite of our times, a caricature wading through a maze of architectural gaps and irrationalities, hopping ceaselessly from one shore to the next.

There is an interloper in Antonio Seguí's new series of paintings. He dons no hat, no suit and no loafers. His gait is unhurried, more appropriately suited to the heat that seems to emanate from his desert-like surroundings than to the hubbub of life in the city.

Yet our interloper is familiar. We recognize in his languid gaze a prototypical inhabitant of Seguí's urban landscapes: the carefully embedded commentary, the heedful record of social reality. Whether donning a jalabiya or a suit, a headpiece or a fedora, Seguí's central figure is, not unlike the artist himself, a citizen of the world.

Born in Córdoba in 1934, Antonio Seguí is one of the greatest Latin American painters of our time. After finishing his studies at the San Fernando Academia in Madrid and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he returned in the 1980s as a professor, the artist traveled the world, visiting North Africa, Latin America and Mexico. Collecting the multiculturalism he encountered overseas, Seguí relocated to Paris in the 1960s and set about capturing the quintessential aura of contemporary urban culture.





I N T E R V I E W

Have you always painted your works in series?

Do you think series convey a message better than a single painting could?

Yes, from the very beginning I worked in series. There are various reasons: wanting to find new approaches by using different techniques from one series to the next, and to go on enjoying painting after I feel a series is beginning to run dry. But undoubtedly, within a given series, I find myself doing unique paintings which arise from some need I can't control.

Since your work is produced in series, do you work on more than one painting at a time?

No. Usually, when I start something, I finish it. It's what allows me to think that I'm still young, seeing as I haven't acquired the necessary maturity and patience yet; I still feel that urgent pull to finish the painting, and sometimes I can botch two or three details in the finishing touches just to finish and move on...

Are there any recurring themes in your work, themes that have accompanied your art from the beginning?

I don't think so, except maybe a human presence, which, even when not clearly depicted, has left a clue or two behind. Other than that, the elements in my paintings appear and disappear as needed, with new elements most probably appearing to avoid repetition.

To do without the human body is more difficult for me because it embodies the very concept of presence and it's our presence that justifies what I do; it's my credo. I couldn't paint without it.

Who is Señor Gustavo? Was he inspired by any particular character?

The characters in my work are anonymous beings who move in anonymous spaces. There's just one exception: when I did the series "Retratos de familia" in the 1970s, the name "Señor Gustavo" appeared in an article and the press went on using it over the years.

In your opinion, what most influenced your painting?

My childhood. It's my consummate model. There's always a certain notion of my childhood in everything I paint, and within this general gist are a multitude of specific memories. It's what's always influenced me in the past and still does... the first few years of my life.

What do you see as the major themes that recur throughout your work?

Man, definitely, with his qualities and defects, and the society he's immersed in. Seen through the eyes of the child I once was, whose memories are an important part of my work.

Referring to philosophy, Nietzsche said that a casual stroll and the act of pondering are inseparable. In your case, are a nice long walk and painting inseparable?

No, and simply because I never go for walks. A few years ago I struggled with some health problems; it was the perfect opportunity to do away with them once and for all. I strongly dislike strolls.

That's interesting, because your paintings often depict a very rich universe of strollers, walkers, people running about...

A tableau doesn't have to reflect an artist's life, hobbies, major interests or existence. And it doesn't always project what is. I've painted events, conditions and situations that I would never be pretentious enough to act out, even if this could lead to certain parallels. Take my Latin American origins. I never had any pretensions to being a South American or Argentinian painter. I'm just a painter. I never labelled myself or my work; and if I've seen my work labelled as "Argentinian", I guess that's just another example of "cultural architecture".

You often depict houses with doors and windows open; but you just as often paint smoke from the chimneys of these houses which is not only a paradox, but rather 'environmentally incorrect'.

And you want me to suggest that these houses are located in warm climates? There's probably an unconscious desire behind my providing certain key elements while leaving gaps. As for the smoke, it's generally an opportunity for me to use bright red or stark white.

Is there a hidden meaning to be uncovered in your work?

What tools do you work with in order to convey this hidden meaning?

I don't think there's any explicit or deliberate double message in my work. I insert elements like people, places, or cities, without any intention of creating a coherent narrative and I think viewers have to bring their own imagination into play in order to build the story that suits them best. In other words, I want the person looking at my work to be determined to participate.

Has travel had a decisive influence on your work? Is there any one destination that means something special to you?

My first trip to Europe and visiting museums to see paintings I already knew from reproductions. Madrid, France and Italy caused the greatest impact on me. Later, in 1957, I travelled through South and Central America and the United States and discovered a world I knew nothing about. I was deeply moved by the great centres of pre-Columbian culture, such as Teotihuacan, Machu Picchu in Peru, San Agustín in Colombia, and Tikal in Guatemala, which had only just been discovered at the time.

You've spent many years of your life in Latin America and in France. Do you highlight these different cultural experiences in your work?

Not particularly, but it's true that all these experiences influence and change us. The period I spent in Mexico, perhaps, left a deep imprint on the work I did during those years, for a variety of reasons. But in any case, virtually everybody in my home country, Argentina, is influenced above all by European culture. So moving to Paris, where I've been living for fifty years, didn't cause any far-reaching change in what I do.

Your works are imbued with humorous criticism of society.

Have your humour and critical sense evolved over the years?

They must have. Political caricature, and later comic strips, played an important role in my work. I'm from the city of Córdoba, in Argentina, where humour is part and parcel of everyday life. Humour and social criticism were a feature of my work from the start. It's true that my graphic output can be much more corrosive. My view of society may well have become more and more vitriolic over the years. The world offers me no excuse for changing that view.





SE SENTIR SOLO, 2012

Acrylic on canvas - 89 x 116 cm - 35 x 45.7 in.



CUANDO SALE EL SOL, 2011

Acrylic on canvas - 150 x 50 cm - 59.1 x 19.7 in.



COMUNICANDO, 2012

Acrylic on canvas - 65 x 100 cm - 25.6 x 39.4 in.





SALIR DE COMPRAS, 2014
Acrylic on canvas - 46 x 55 cm - 18.1 x 21.6 in.





GENTE FRENTE AL MAR, 2014 Acrylic on canvas - 46 x 55 cm - 18.1 x 21.6 in.



PARA UNA POSTAL, 2014 Acrylic on canvas - 46 x 55 cm - 18.1 x 21.6 in.



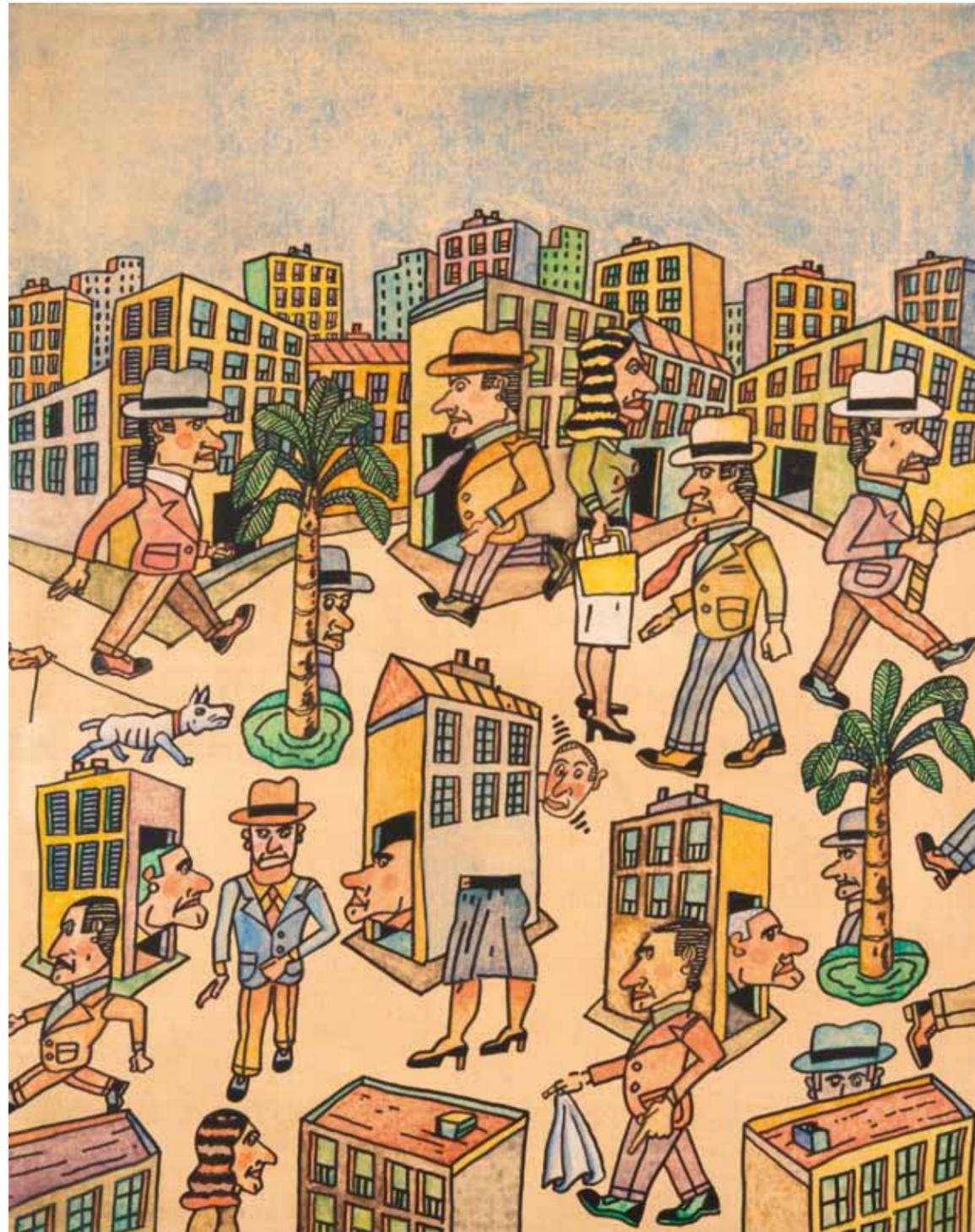


CIELO INESTABLE, 2014
Acrylic on canvas - 81 x 100 cm - 31.9 x 39.4 in.

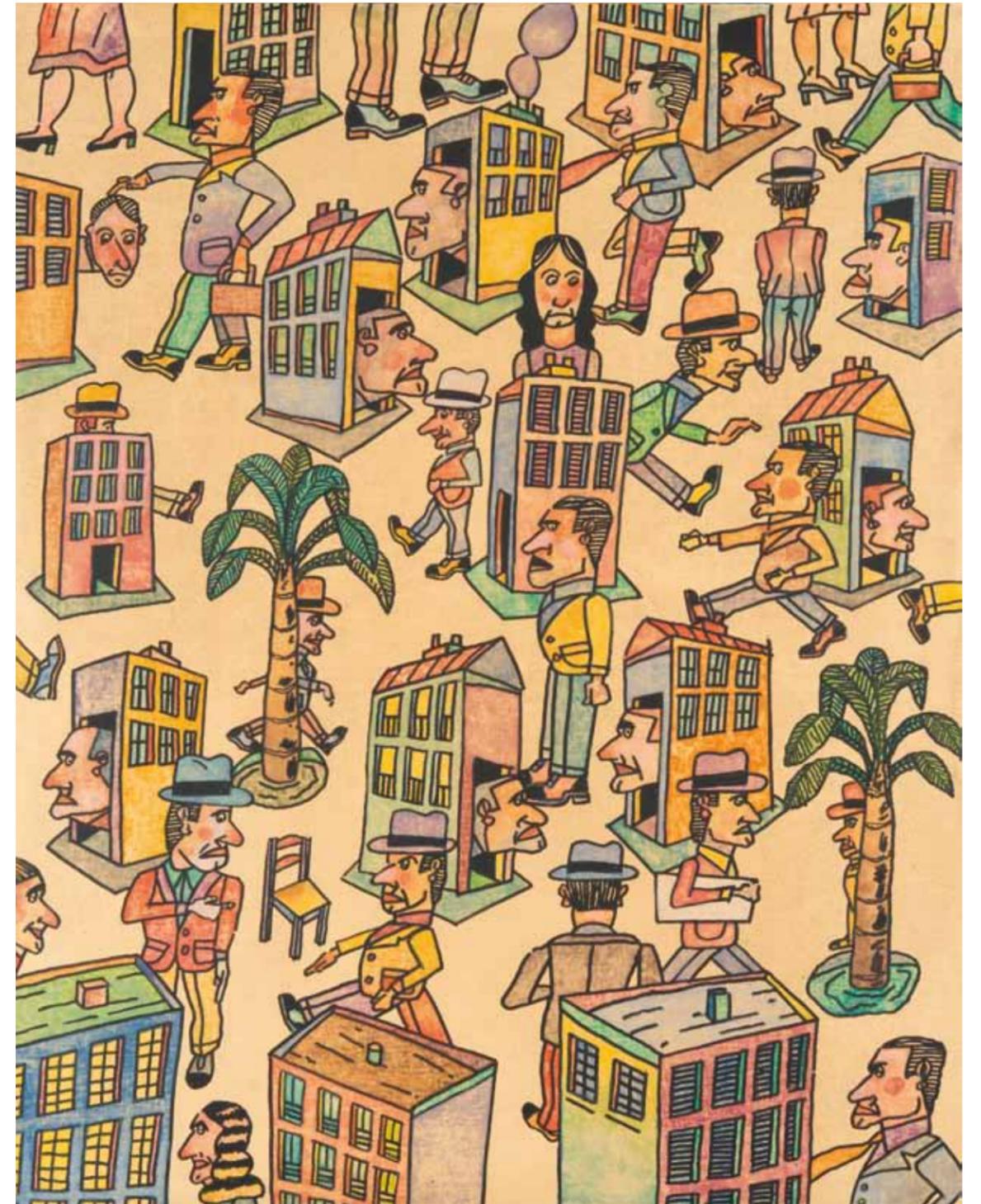


ESTÁN TODOS, 2014
Acrylic on canvas - 81 x 100 cm - 31.9 x 39.4 in.





PERDER EL PAÑUELO, 2014
Acrylic on canvas - 81 x 65 cm - 31.9 x 25.6 in.

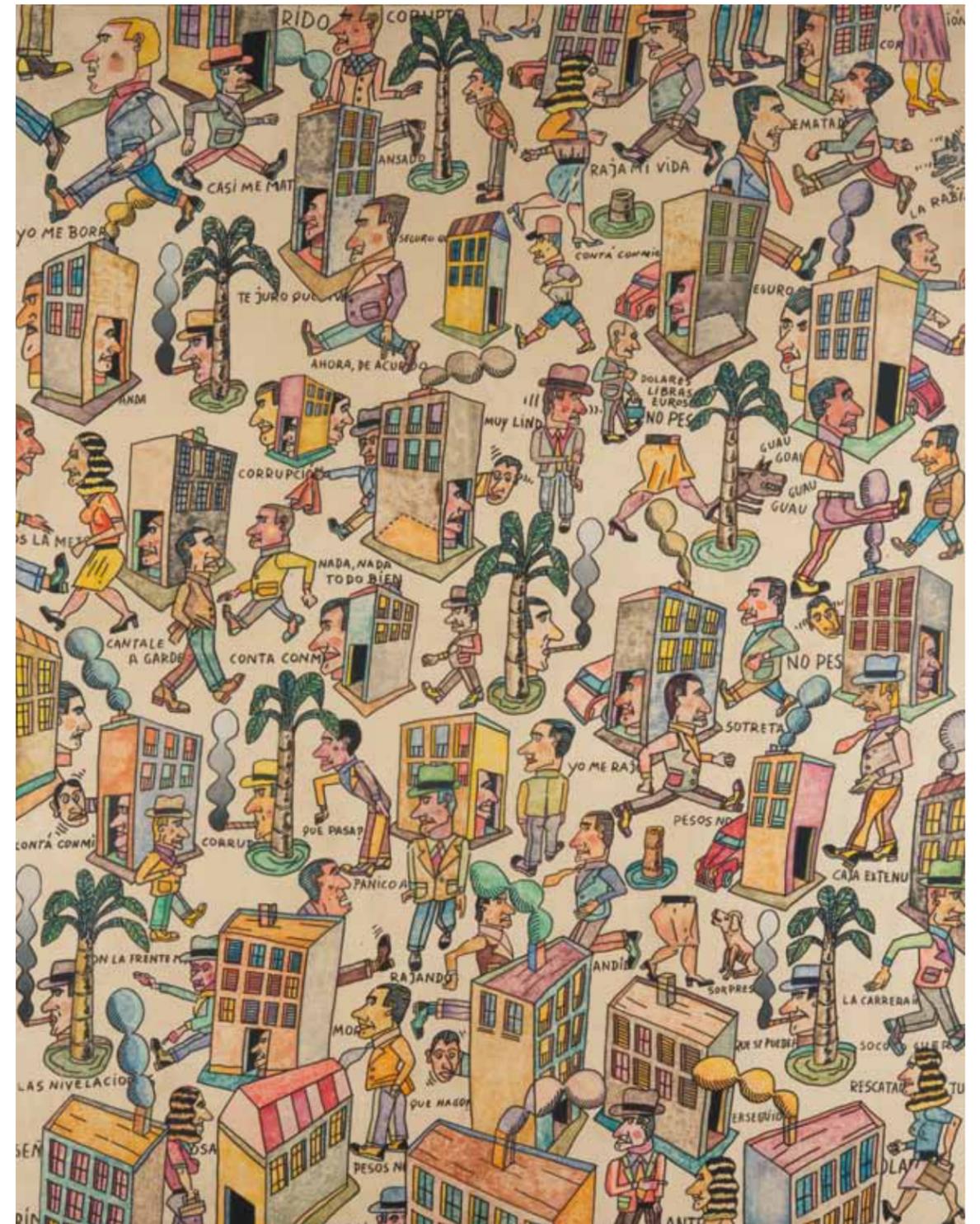


SOÑAR DE PIE, 2014
Acrylic on canvas - 81 x 65 cm - 31.9 x 25.6 in.





COLOR DE ESPERANZA, 2014 Acrylic on canvas - 200 x 200 cm - 78.7 x 78.7 in.



TODOS A LA CALLE, 2014 Acrylic on canvas - 146 x 114 cm - 57.5 x 44.9 in.



RINCÓN PEATONAL, 2014 Acrylic on canvas - 50 x 150 cm - 19.7 x 59.1 in.





PAISAJE SIN PALABRAS, 2013
Acrylic on canvas - 146 x 114 cm - 57.5 x 44.9 in.



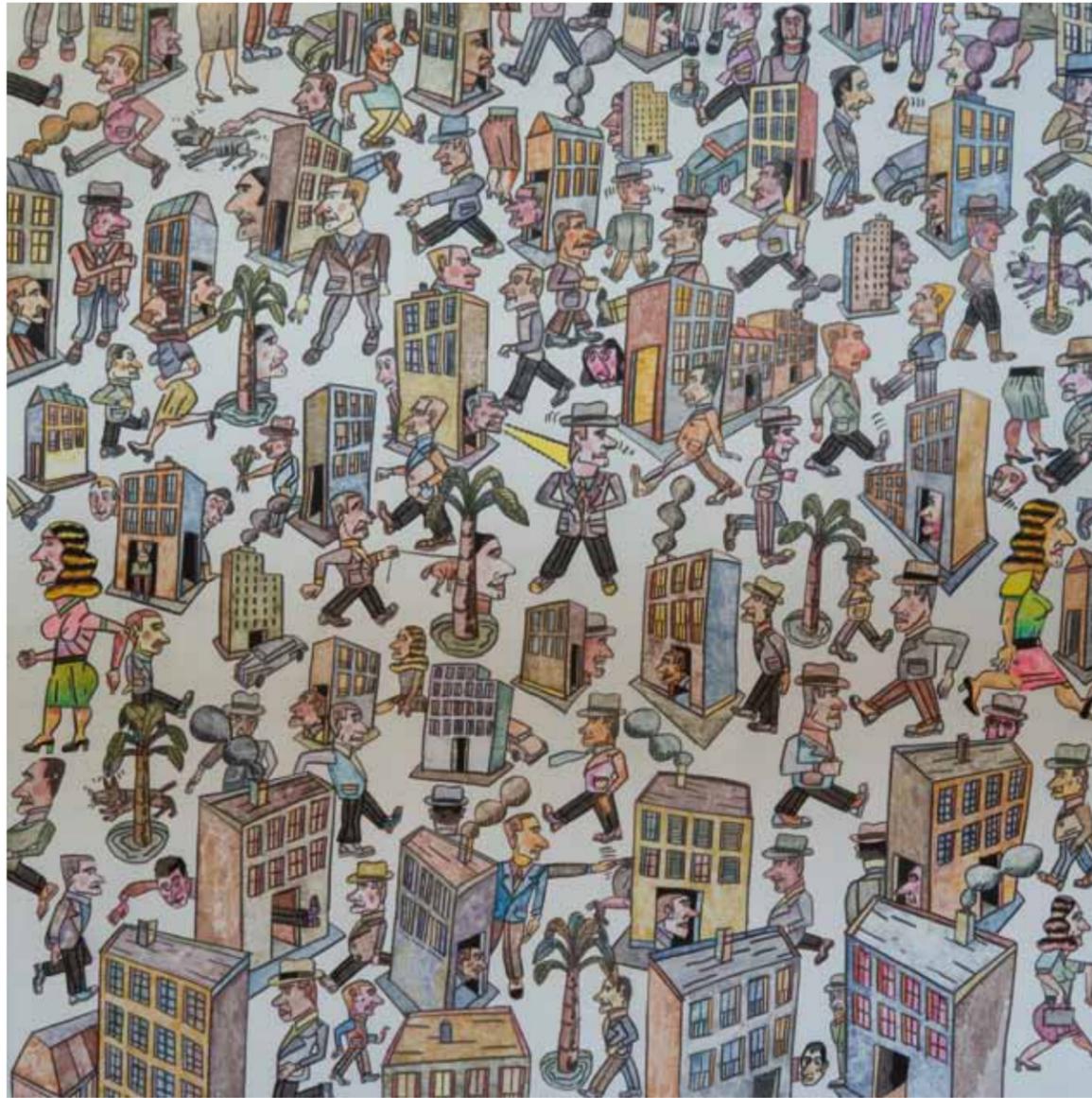
VIVIR COMO SE PUEDE, 2013
Acrylic on canvas - 146 x 114 cm - 57.5 x 44.9 in.



RECUERDOS DE LA INFANCIA, 2014

Acrylic on canvas - 146 x 114 cm - 57.5 x 44.9 in.





POBRE MI ALMA, 2013

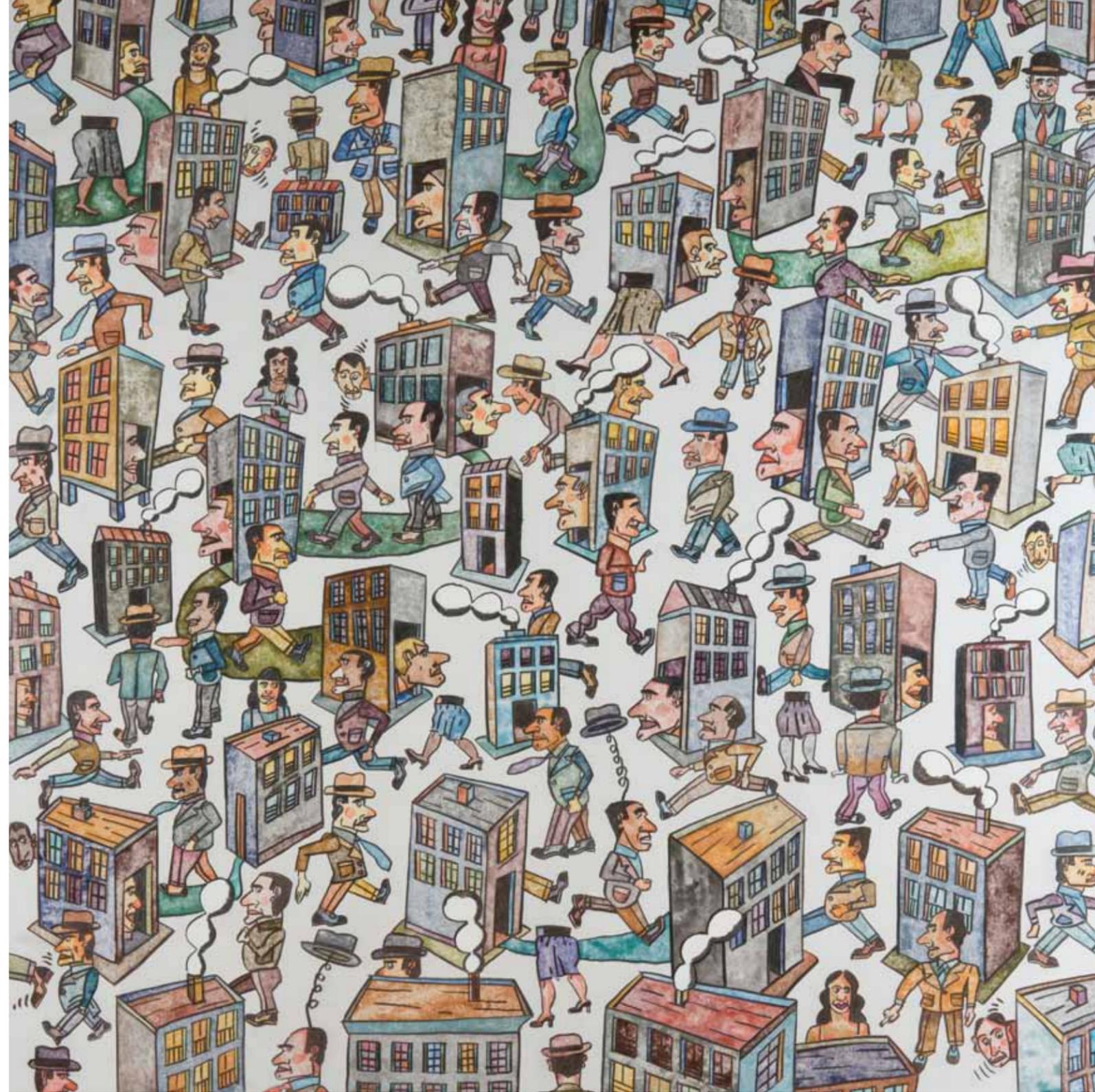
Acrylic on canvas - 200 x 200 cm - 78.7 x 78.7 in.



SUEÑO AZUL, 2014

Acrylic on canvas - 200 x 200 cm - 78.7 x 78.7 in.

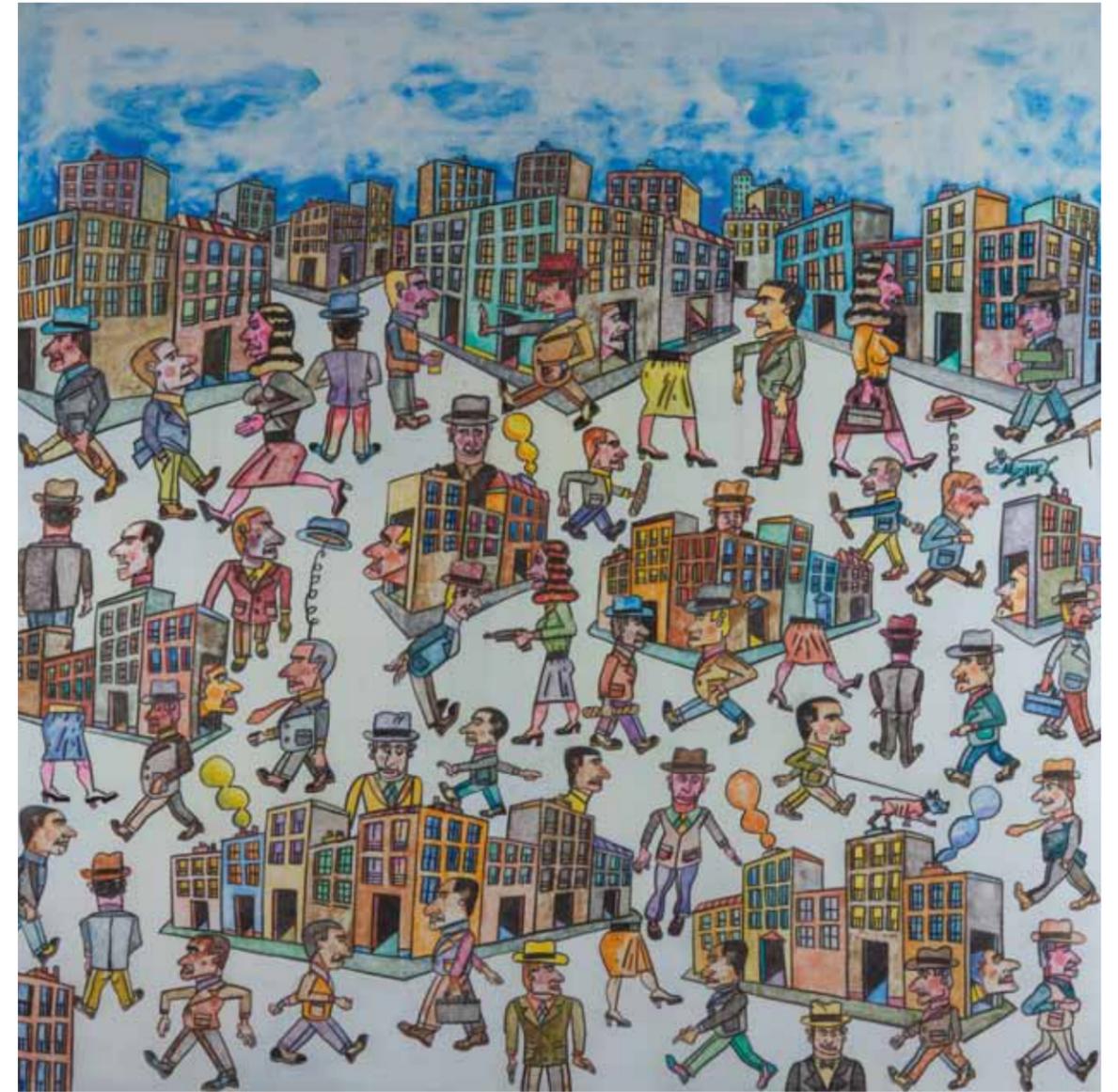
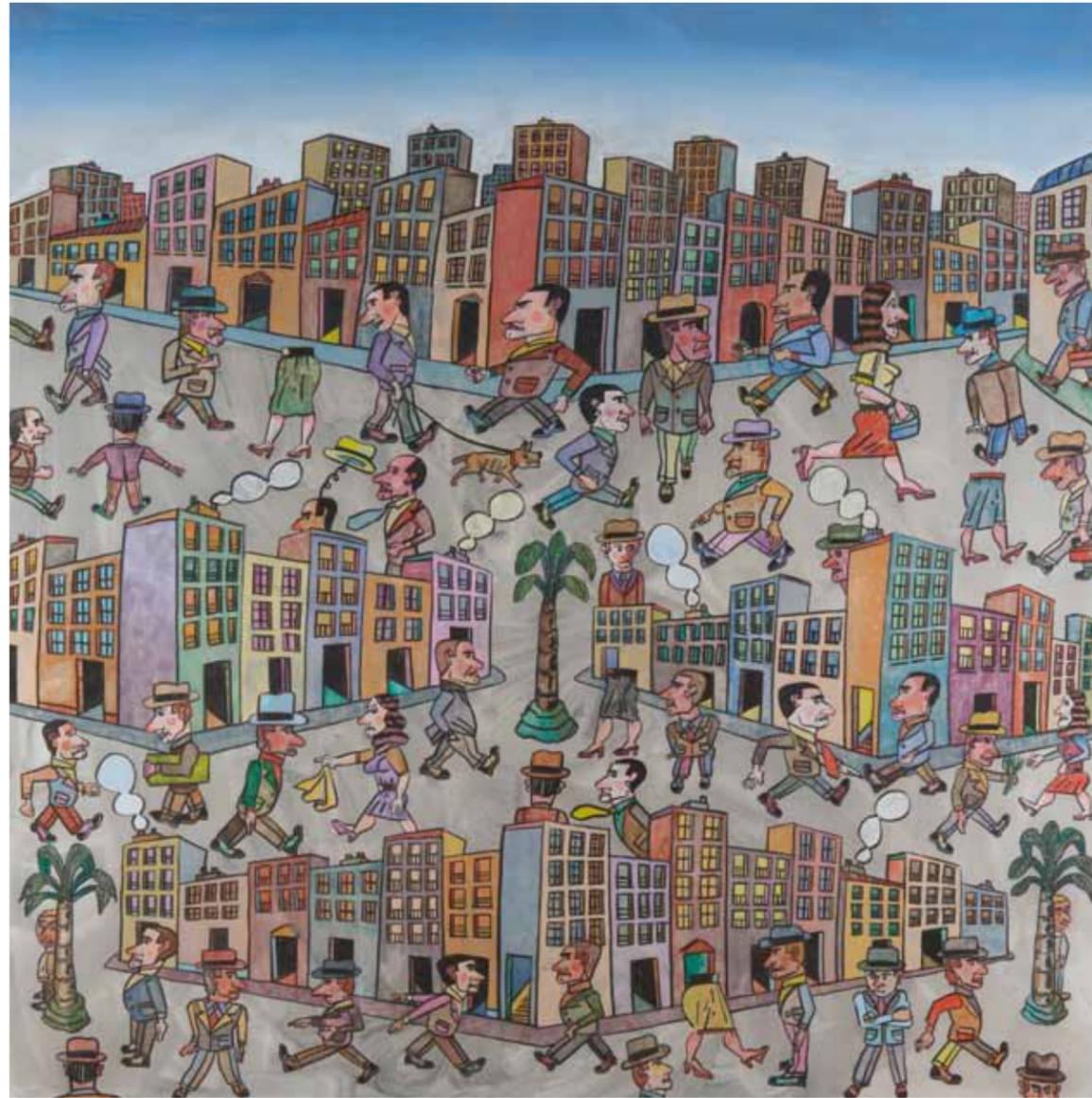




POCAS SEÑORAS, 2014

Acrylic on canvas - 200 x 200 cm - 78.7 x 78.7 in.





FIESTAS DE GUARDAR, 2014

Acrylic on canvas - 200 x 200 cm - 78.7 x 78.7 in.

SER POBRE ES INCÓMODO, 2014

Acrylic on canvas - 200 x 200 cm - 78.7 x 78.7 in.





UNA MAÑANA CUALQUIERA, 2014 Acrylic on canvas - 50 x 150 cm - 19.7 x 59.1 in.





ANTONIO SEGUÍ

Born in 1934, Córdoba, Argentina
Academia San Fernando, Madrid, Spain
Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France

SELECTED PRIZES AND HONORS

- 1966 Grand Prize, National Museum of Western Art, V Tokyo International Print Biennial, Japan
- 1967 Grand Prize, Salón Latinoamericano de Dibujo y Grabado, Caracas, Venezuela
Grand Prize, Salón Internacional de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
Grand Prize, Salón Latinoamericano de San Juan, Puerto Rico
1st International Prize of the city of Darmstadt, Germany
- 1968 Grand Prize, Cracow Engraving Biennial, Poland
- 1969 Transturist Skofja Loka Prize, VIII International Engraving Exhibition, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- 1980 Medal of Honour, VIII Cracow International Engraving Biennial, Poland
- 1983 Knight of the order of Arts and Letters, France
- 1986 International Latino American and Caribbean Engraving VII Biennial Prize of San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 1989 Di Tella Prize, las Artes Visuales, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1990 Grand Prize, Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Prize, las Artes Visuales (Trayectoria de un artista), AICA - Sección Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1995 Gold Medal, XI Norsk Internasjonl Grafikk Triennale, Fredrikstad, Norway
- 2002 Michetti Prize, Francavilla al Mare, Italy
Konex de Platino Prize, (Gráfica), Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2008 Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters, France



SELECTED EXHIBITIONS (SINCE 1985)

- | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| 2014 | Galerie Janine Rubeiz, Beirut, Lebanon
Palača Milesi and Galeriji Kula, Split, Croatia
Must Gallery, Gordes, France | Galeria 111, Lisbon, Portugal
Dirimart, Istanbul, Turkey | 1996 | Galerie Municipale, Vitry-sur-Seine, France
Alberto Rougés Cultural Center, San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina
Art Museum of the Americas, Washington DC, USA | 1990 | Claude Bernard Gallery, New York, USA
Galerie Michel Delorme, '90 Art Cologne, Germany | |
| 2013 | Galerie Argentine, Paris, France
Durban Segnini Gallery, Miami, USA | 2004 | Galería Rubbers (Space Alvear), Buenos Aires, Argentina
Pablo Goebel Fine Arts, Mexico City, Mexico | 1995 | Claude Bernard Gallery, Art Miami '95, USA
Galerie Marwan Hoss, Paris, France | 1989 | Elisabeth Franck Gallery, FIAC, Paris, France
Botanique, Brussels, Belgium |
| 2012 | AMS Marlborough Gallery, Santiago de Chile, Chile
Galerie Univer, Paris, France | 2003 | Galerie Le Point, Beirut, Lebanon
Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Wifredo Lam, Havana, Cuba
Frissiras Museum, Athens, Greece
Museo de la Universidad Nacional del Tres de Febrero, Caseros, Argentina | 1994 | Galeria Fernando Santos, Porto, Portugal.
Elisabeth Franck Gallery, Knokke-Le-Zoute, Belgium | 1988 | Claude Bernard Gallery, New York, USA |
| 2011 | Galerie Claude Bernard and Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris, France
Anne-Marie et Roland Pallade art contemporain, Lyon, France
Nora Haime Gallery, Pinta Art Fair, New York, USA | 2002 | Galeria António Prates, Lisbon, Portugal
Galerie d'Art Contemporain, Chamalières, France
Galeria 111, Lisbon, Portugal
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Carcassonne, France | 1993 | Galleria San Carlo, Milan, Italy
Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Galerie Marwan Hoss, FIAC, Paris, France | 1987 | Elisabeth Franck Gallery, Art Chicago, USA
Galería Rubbers, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Galerie Renoir - Le Latina, Paris, France |
| 2010 | Le Salon d'Art, Brussels, Belgium
Espace d'Art Contemporain André Malraux, Colmar, France | 2001 | Galerie Jacqueline Storme, Lille, France
Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Galerie Claude Bernard, Paris, France | 1992 | Casa Rosada, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Galerie Sonia Zannettacci, Geneva, Switzerland | 1986 | Galería Quintero, Barranquilla, Colombia
Galería Rubbers, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Praxis Art Gallery, Santiago de Chile, Chile |
| 2009 | Galerie Hélène Trintignan, Montpellier, France
Galerie Sonia Zannettacci, Geneva, Switzerland
Galería António Prates, Lisbon, Portugal | 2000 | Musée du Château des Ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard, France
Ecole Municipale d'Arts, Boulogne-sur-Mer, France
Galería Rubbers, Buenos Aires, Argentina | 1991 | M. Gutiérrez Fine Arts, Art Miami '91, USA
Galerie Michel Delorme, SAGA '91, Paris, France | 1985 | Présence Contemporaine, Cloître Saint-Louis, Aix-en-Provence, France
Galería Rubbers, Buenos Aires, Argentina |
| 2008 | Galerie La Passerelle, IUFMs, Mont-Saint-Aignan, France
Thanassis Frissiras Gallery, Athens, Greece | 1999 | Durban Segnini Gallery, Art Miami '99, Miami, USA
Villa Saint-Cyr, Bourg-la-Reine, France | | | | |
| 2007 | Opera Gallery, Hong Kong
Galerie Anne-Marie et Roland Pallade art contemporain, Lyon, France
Ecole d'Arts Plastiques, Châtelleraut, France | 1998 | Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris, France
Galerie Marwan Hoss, Paris, France
Museo municipal de Bellas Artes Dr. Genaro Perez, Córdoba, Argentina | | | | |
| 2006 | Galerie Hélène Trintignan, Montpellier, France
Centre Culturel du Forum, Saint-Gratien, France
Durban Segnini Gallery, Miami, USA | 1997 | Palais Ducal, Nevers, France
Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico
Espace Arc-en-Ciel, Lievin, France
Gallery Durban, Caracas, Venezuela | | | | |
| 2005 | Galerie d'Art Graphique, Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée national d'Art Moderne, Paris, France
Galerie Janine Rubeiz, Beirut, Lebanon | | | | | | |

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Museum of Modern Art, New York
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, California
Musée national d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo
Library of Congress, Washington DC
Museum of Modern Art, Buenos Aires
Museum of Fine Arts, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro
Museum of Contemporary Art, São Paulo



among many others...



CREDITS

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