



ISABEL CROXATTO

GALERÍA



## PRESS RELEASE

### ISABEL CROXATTO GALERÍA PRESENTS *LOVESONG*, SOLO EXHIBITION BY ARTIST WLADYMRIR BERNECHEA


**Isabel Croxatto Galería**, international art platform based in Santiago, Chile, presents *Lovesong*, solo exhibition by the artist **Wladimir Bernechea**. The show, curated by Chilean researcher **Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia**, gathers 24 recent paintings that transit between loneliness and longing in a silent battle between black and white, to be **presented online starting 28 April** in the virtual space **ICG+**.

Isabel Croxatto Galería presents its fifth virtual exhibition, a new format that was inaugurated a year ago with the show *El Turista* by Coco González Lohse -the first to be produced 100% digitally in Chile-, with which it has furthered its programme of innovation in the presentation of contemporary art online to a global audience.

The exhibition title, *Lovesong*, is a direct reference to the song of the same name by the British band The Cure from 1989, coincidentally also the year of the artist's birth. 'Whenever I'm alone with you, you make me feel whole again... However far away, I will always love you' sings Robert Smith, the band's frontman, over a dark pop-tinged melody. In the same way, Wladimir Bernechea explores recurring themes in his production, such as loneliness, melancholy and introspection, through faces, figures and blurred landscapes that silently appear between the sublimation of the whites and the gloom of the blacks.

Growing up in 1990s Chile, the artist belongs to a generation whose childhood was fully immersed in pre-internet globalisation, later influenced by high information flows and the deterritorialisation of imaginaries. Pop, as well as Japanese culture represented in the West through anime and manga, are cardinal references in Wladimir's work, who portrays his characters by incorporating their shapes, physiques and costumes.

This influence can also be seen in the research he has conducted on the subject, which he has presented in the publication of the books *De la Tierra al Cielo. Arte, cultura japonesa y escenas locales* [*From Earth to Heaven: Art, Japanese culture and local scenes*] (2018) and *Neo Tokio: Historia del Anime en la Cultura Chilena* [*Neo-Tokyo: History of Anime in Chilean Culture*] (2020). His landscapes, meanwhile, are especially tributary to Soviet architectural brutalism and postmodernism, invoking scenes of large, abandoned and desolate buildings east of the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe.



*Lovesong* consists of 24 small and medium-sized oil paintings on canvas, giving way to a more intimate encounter with solitary characters, scenes and landscapes. ‘The exhibition points to a common state of a certain human emotionality. However, it is not a narrative (literary or cinematographic) emotionality, but one strictly linked to painting’, Wladimir Bernechea explains. ‘What is represented consists primarily of fragmentary scenes that do not belong to a clear context. In this sense, they use their ambiguity to draw the viewer into a mere state of contemplation’.

The exhibition is curated by Chilean researcher Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia, founder and director of the magazine and publishing house *ÉCFRASIS, proyectos*, in Santiago. In his curatorial text, Valenzuela-Valdivia writes: ‘Through these paintings, Bernechea shows us his insistence on pictorial technique, introducing us to a series of characters who are portrayed individually - or in groups - muted by the absence of faces. This silent character is enhanced by the abandonment of contour lines, by the blurring of the pictorial paste and by the union of black and white’.

The virtual space ICG+, which holds the exhibition, presents a renewed 3D architecture, developed by the collective **deeptime.art**. In this regard, gallery director **Isabel Croxatto** comments: ‘The architecture of our virtual gallery this year will mutate into a pavilion located in the virtual representation of the different landscapes of this region of the world, giving a geographical context to the voice of our young and emerging artists.’ ‘A fundamental part of our endeavour is to present contemporary art from the south of the world to a global audience, and this proposal, which will be replicated with other artists and landscapes, is a new way of rescuing and inhabiting these territories’, she adds.

*Lovesong*, virtual exhibition by **Wladimir Bernechea**, will be available to the public starting 28 April 2021 at [www.isabelcroxattogaleria.com](http://www.isabelcroxattogaleria.com), with free access from anywhere in Chile and the world.



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**LOVESONG | WLADYMR BERNECHEA**

Curator | Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia

ICG+ | Online Exclusive

28 Apr – 9 Jun | 2021

**ISABEL CROXATTO GALERÍA**

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ICG+, Isabel Croxatto Galería's virtual exhibition space, is developed with the support of **ProChile**, agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile for the promotion of Chilean industries abroad.

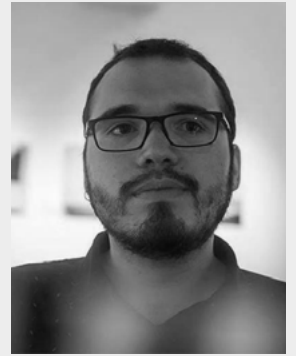
Wladimir Bernechea is a visual artist and writer, Bachelor of Art from the Universidad de Chile, Master of Arts from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), and a former Postgraduate Research Fellow at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico.

As a visual artist, his work has been exhibited in spaces such as Galería Metropolitana, Centro Cultural Las Condes, Museo de Artes Visuales and the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Chile, as well as in Mexico, Guatemala, the United States, Italy, Estonia and Japan. His work is part of public and private collections in Latin America and Europe, including the Colección MAC of the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chile), and the Luciano Benetton Collection (Italy).

He has been featured in contemporary art publications, such as *Astrónomos Sin Estrellas* by the Chilean critic Guillermo Machuca (2018), *Sub30* (2014), book that compiled the works of 60 Chilean young artists, and *Ojo Andino Chile* (2015), publication by Luciano Benetton that gathered over 170 pieces by Chilean artists.

The artist has published the books *De la Tierra al Cielo. Arte, cultura japonesa y escenas locales [From Earth to Heaven: Art, Japanese culture and local scenes]* (Ediciones Filacteria, Santiago) in 2018 and *Neo Tokio: Historia del Anime en la Cultura Chilena [Neo-Tokyo: History of Anime in Chilean Culture]* (Ediciones Zero, Santiago) in 2020, in which he reviews the impact of Japanese animation and culture on Chilean contemporary art for the past 40 years. His texts on studies of Latin American artistic scenes and Japanese animation and culture have been published in various digital magazines, catalogues and written press in Chile.

Wladimir Bernechea lives and works in Santiago.



SEBASTIÁN VALENZUELA-VALDIVIA | BIO

Santiago, Chile, 1990

Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia is a researcher and curator/editor of contemporary art. He is currently in charge of the Debate and Thought programme and the access and circulation of the Archive of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende in Chile.

He has specialised in the area of archives and research through work experience at the Digital Archive Project at ICAA of the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston (2018-2020); developer of the Ronald Kay archive (2019); referencer and researcher at the Centro de Documentación de Artes Visuales de Chile (2014-2018) and in public and private consultancies in the creation and research of archives.

Since 2010 he has founded and directed *ÉCFRASIS, proyectos*, a platform for the publication, research and promotion of Latin American art through a journal, publishing house, research and a public programme.

He has published books, articles and essays in different physical and digital media -both in Chile and abroad-, has been part of the international committee of the Florence Biennale, as well as being part of the jury of several competitions. Furthermore, he has edited books, given lectures in Chile and abroad, and taken part in various cultural media such as Observatorio de Arte (director), Artishock (columnist), El Desconcierto (columnist), Atlas (editor and columnist), in projects such as: *Una revisión al fotolibro chileno* (directed by Horario Fernández, Andrea Josch and Luis Weinstein), *Glosario de Arte Contemporáneo* (directed by Nelly Richard and Sebastián Vidal), among others. He is currently working on his second book with Ediciones Metales Pesados (Chile) entitled *Mediaciones del cuerpo a través del archivo: foto, video y libro performance en Chile* (1973-1990).

Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia lives and works in Santiago.



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Isabel Croxatto Galería, international art platform, was founded in 2012 as a space of excellence focused on emerging and established artists with national and international recognition.

The gallery centers its endeavours on presenting and promoting contemporary art from the south of the world, boosting the work of artists in Chile and abroad, contributing to the renovation of ways of art collecting, and breaking into new markets for contemporary art in collaboration with artists, curators, collectors, and public and private institutions.

Its program of audience development encourages the dialogue between the spectator and the artwork on a personal scale and in a welcoming environment, creating links and a close approach to the contemporary practices of its artists. Along with its annual program of solo exhibitions, the gallery holds group shows through collaborative curatorships, creating crossovers between art and context. In addition, it takes part in renowned international contemporary art fairs, such as Art Central Hong Kong and Contemporary Istanbul, fostering innovative and avant-garde projects through global promotion. In 2020, **ICG+** is added to its portfolio, a virtual exhibition space developed to host a program of exhibitions specially designed for an online experience, taking the work of its artists to every corner of the planet.

The artists' searches that Isabel Croxatto Galería's curatorial project conveys revolve around contemporary problems of the human condition, from the intimate and social body, from memory and archive, from the analogue and the digital. Inspired by figurative art, each of them, through a variety of media, aesthetically proposes unique and challenging enquiries and responses that invite us to reflect on the times we live in.

Winner of the Best Exhibition Prize | Gallery Weekend Santiago 2018

Isabel Croxatto Galería is a member of **AGAC**, Association of Contemporary Art Galleries of Chile, and is sponsored by **SÍSMICA**, sector brand for the Chilean visual arts, and **ProChile**, agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Chile for the promotion of Chilean industries abroad.

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