

Carlos Amorales

Sat 6 – Sun 28 March 2010

Gallery 1

To coincide with the 16th installment of ¡Viva! Spanish and Latin American Film Festival (Sat 6 - Sat 27 March), Cornerhouse presents a solo show by one of Mexico's leading contemporary artists Carlos Amorales.

Using a broad range of media, including performance, animation, sculpture, installation and music, Amorales takes familiar images and reprocesses them to create ambiguous and unsettling forms. Often dramatic and dark in tone, all of his artworks draw on his 'liquid archive' – a digital database of images that Amorales has been assembling over several years. Taken from books, magazines, the internet and the artist's own personal photographs, the images are distilled into silhouetted archetypes, then subject to endless recycling, manipulation, and combination. Recurring motifs include birds, wolves, spider webs, buildings and human-animal hybrids – instantly recognisable forms that, by introducing an element of fantasy, insist on a personal interpretation. This constantly evolving image bank is frequently used by a host of collaborators including musicians, animators, designers and tarot card readers. Challenging the boundary between reality and fantasy, Amorales' practice investigates the source of our shared visual memories and the means by which we interpret the world around us.

For this exhibition Amorales presents two recent works: ***Psicofonias*** and ***Discarded Spider*** (both 2008). ***Psicofonias*** is a two-screen video installation created with musician Julián Lede and digital programmer André Pahl. Amorales' digitized graphic drawings are transformed into dots and move slowly down the screen. The realtime-animation or 'virtual pianola' translates the dots into musical notes that trigger two synthesizers playing the discordant sounds of a piano and a harpsichord - a cacophonous soundtrack that floods the gallery space.

Video installation ***Discarded Spider*** depicts Amorales' silhouette as he manipulates giant sculptural spider webs. This is one of the animations produced by ***Broken Animals***, an animation studio that Amorales created in Mexico city by assembling a diverse collection of artists and musicians. Intended as a foil to the Disney studio's safe and conformist employment of fantasy, Amorales' animations refuse to provide neat answers. Dissolving boundaries between media, his works are rendered mysterious and menacing in surreal visions influenced by gothic literature, mythological motifs, and Mexican popular culture.