

LewAllenGalleries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 16th, 2016

Joe Ramiro Garcia: *Optimist*

Exhibition Dates: October 28 – December 4

Artist Reception: Fri, October 28, 2016, 5 - 7

Gallery Hours: Mon - Fri, 10 - 6; Sat, 10 - 5

LewAllen Galleries

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Thinking of Painting, 2016,
Oil and alkyd on panel, 24 in x 24 in



Paint Swatch, 2016,
Oil and alkyd on canvas over panel,
17 in x 15 in

Santa Fe, NM – LewAllen Galleries is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition, *Joe Ramiro Garcia: Optimist*. Extensively exhibited, published and collected, the distinctive imagery and highly energetic palette of the artist's oil and alkyd paintings evoke a sense the familiar through different modes of iconography and nostalgia. On view from October 29 through December 4, his latest exhibition at LewAllen Galleries will present new works that combine disparate modes of figuration to examine the most unusual remnants of our shared cultural memory.

A highly regarded artist with a strong printmaking background, Garcia juxtaposes Pop Art's cultural iconography with an expressionistic, painterly aesthetic. There is a cloudy air of the familiar within the figurative elements of his painting; the wordplay associations, the blurriness of past recollection and of late-night TV, his

characters and cartoons sprung from both memory and the memorabilia of the past and the present. His technical approach relies on oils, brushes, scrapers, and a hand-applied lithographic technique that forms painted surfaces which operate in a middle ground between painting, lithograph, and collage.

Alternating between flat abstraction and a convincing *trompe l'oeil*, Garcia's fragmented suggestions of space read like nimble imprints of the machinations of memory. With no attempt to

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emulate conventional notions of composition, these elements animate a space that seems at once recognizable and eerily enigmatic—a tableau of discordant players depicting a mysterious, enticing whole.

While they lack a specific narrative, Garcia's pieces provoke a different type of logic; his reflections on sensation and paradox, mortality, joviality and nostalgia all add to the weight of his work. Playing with the familiar and the extraordinary, with so-called childhood imagery in an "adult" context, Garcia so obviously relishes disrupting hierarchies to get at the universal. The artist asserts, "I hope to displace the familiar just enough to encourage re-familiarization with the constant flux of urban experience." By referencing both popular culture and private experiences, his psychologically resonant paintings navigate between the satisfaction of instant recognition and the riddle of a fantasy or elusive memory.

Born in Houston, Texas, Garcia attended Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts before studying at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He was honored in 2005 with a Painters and Sculptors Grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Exhibited in museums and private institutions internationally, his works are featured in several books on Southwestern art.



Real World, 2016,
Collage and mixed media on archival
pigment print on paper, 12 ½ in x 10 ¼ in

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Nobody Cares, 2016,
Oil and alkyd on canvas, 17 in x 19 in



Numbers Game, 2016,
Oil and alkyd on canvas over panel,
19 in x 17 in



Ice House, 2016,
Oil and alkyd on canvas over panel,
24 in x 24 in



Fair Game, 2016,
Oil and alkyd on canvas, 17 in x 15 in