



VILLA MAGDALENA

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Cy Schnabel, son of the painter and filmmaker Julian Schnabel, opens his second gallery in Madrid: Villa Magdalena.

Patricia Villalobos
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Cy Schnabel poses at the entrance of Villa Magdalena, located at number 2 Plaza de San Nicolás in Madrid. Photo: Ángela Suárez.

Cy Schnabel inaugurates Villa Magdalena, an art gallery that breaks with the capital's artistic mold by championing painting in the Austrias district.

Cy Schnabel opens the second location of Villa Magdalena, this time in Madrid.

From Villa Magdalena's new exhibition space, you can hear the bells of the Church of San Nicolás de Bari—the oldest in Madrid—ringing just across the street. It is not common to find an art gallery in the Austrias neighborhood; and precisely for that reason, Cy Schnabel knew it was the

right place. Five years after opening Villa Magdalena in San Sebastián, he has now chosen this historic setting—a 17th-century building with high ceilings, wooden beams, and stone—to establish his Madrid venue. A white cube with memory. "I was interested in creating a new experience, a dialogue between the neighborhood, the space, and the works," he explains. His goal is clear: to consolidate the presence of Villa Magdalena and its artists in Spain. "Madrid has an incredible art scene, but many international creators don't have representation here. I think something was missing along the lines of our proposal: symbolic figuration, narrative, expressionism... We could fill that space."



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The project is also a statement of intent. “When I arrived in San Sebastián, I sensed a certain institutional criticism of painting. It seemed that conceptual art or performance were considered innovative, and that painting was something classical. I saw an opportunity there.” For the gallerist and curator, bringing little-known artists to Spain—sometimes even to Europe—is about offering audiences new ways of seeing. His eye is more than well trained. He grew up in New York surrounded by creators, and it is inevitable that his surname recalls the painter and filmmaker Julian Schnabel, his father, with whom he maintains “a very healthy dialogue about art,” and whose “encyclopedic knowledge” he highlights. But Cy’s path has been deliberately his own.



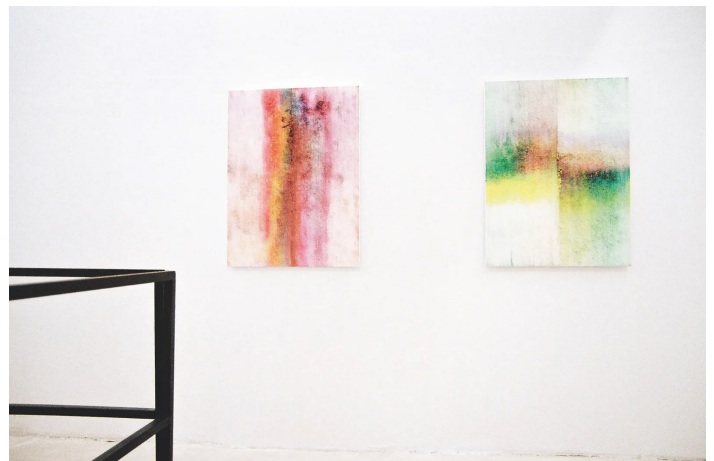
For Cy Schnabel, the goal is clear: “I was interested in creating a new experience—a dialogue between the neighborhood, the space, and the artworks.” Photo: Ángela Suárez.

Cy Schnabel studied Political Science—“To enter the world of visual art, you have to understand the global stage”—and embarked on a research phase, mapping out his own path: travels across Europe, the United States, and Latin America; museums, galleries, exhibitions, and, above all, extensive reading. “Working in Mexico City and San Sebastián helped me find my own voice and define my identity within art.” For him, a work should have an element of strangeness, creating a sense of unease—a mix of recognizable and invented elements. “It’s something instinctive. I’m interested in it being timeless, and at the same time reflecting a historical genealogy, so you can place where its language comes from.” These are qualities he attributes to the protagonists of his inaugural exhibition, *Field Trip* (on view until July 26), which brings together Cecilia De Nisco and Richard Tinkler, two artists previously unseen in Spain. With it, Schnabel—who is “passionate about creating exhibitions and telling stories”—has constructed a fictional relationship between the two painters and proposes a fantastical journey into invented worlds.



“Working in Mexico City and in San Sebastián helped me develop my own voice and define my identity within art,” the curator tells us while visiting the inaugural exhibition. Photo: Ángela Suárez.

In Madrid, he hopes to “break new ground”: to bring visibility to artists who are not yet part of the major circuit, position them within institutional collections, create a market where one does not yet exist—“the fact that many collectors from my time in Mexico have moved to the capital is a factor”—and, above all, to generate a new narrative. It is long-term work. And as he envisions it, the bells ring out once again.



Field Trip, the inaugural exhibition of Villa Magdalena, presents for the first time in Spain the work of Cecilia De Nisco and Richard Tinkler. Photo: Ángela Suárez.