

RAFFINADENET.DK

# JAVIER AGUILERA

## OTAKU RIDER

October 2nd – October 23rd

GALLERY POULSEN 2010



**GALLERY POULSEN**

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Member of Danish Galleries Association



# A PUNCH IN THE NOSE



"LEFTIE", 2008 / 127X40X26CM / POLYESTER RESIN AND CLOTHING

The first time I came face to face with one of Javier Aguilera's figures, I was deeply affected. It happened at a fair in Kurfürstendamm in 2008. My girlfriend and I had already trudged past lots of exhibits, as usual, I was looking for new talents that make a difference – movers and shakers. But I hadn't had much luck that day. Until suddenly, there was "Leftie", right in front of us. I'd actually walked past it... but then stopped and went back.

"Leftie" is Javier Aguilera's little street boy, sniffing glue as he looks up at you with pleading eyes. Bang...! The boy hit me right in the gut, and before I knew it, he was back in my gallery in Copenhagen.

It was clear from the start, though, that I wasn't the only one bowled over by these sculptures.

In 2009, I was lucky enough to bring a number of his sculptures to Copenhagen and exhibited them alongside Andrew Nygaard's pictures. However, another year passed before he had found time for this – his first solo exhibition in Denmark.

I'm proud to be exhibiting his brand new work in this exhibition, which also introduces a new side of him – drawings and paintings. All the works reflect his curiosity. Last time he was here, we were having a meal in Tivoli Gardens when he suddenly left the table and disappeared. He'd seen a girl with purple hair and was asking if he could take her photograph. He does that all the time: He sees interesting people, takes their photo and includes them in his work.

Javier Aguilera's figures all have a flaw of some kind. Some of them have been beaten, others have been drinking. Many of them have probably been on the wrong side of the law. Some are despairing and depressed, others are provocatively aggressive. And that's how they reveal what's concealed under the polished surface of society. And all that's concealed is exactly what Gallery Poulsen wants to put firmly in the spotlight.

Enjoy  
Morten Poulsen



Morten Poulsen

# OUT OF THE DARK

Tom Hermansen MA (History of Art), Art Critic

While the youth rebellion and Women's Lib were rocking the foundations of the old societal structures of the western world, the Catholic general Franco kept Spain in an iron grip. Everyone was held on a short lead and any kind of excess was unwelcome. That was the situation until the dictator's death in 1975.

The country's constitution wasn't signed until 1978, and then Spain began looking forward to a more promising future. The past was quickly left behind and the period after Franco's death brought light and vitality to Spain. Working with

forbidden and irrational subjects was permitted. This is clear in the work of film director and storyteller Pedro Almodóvar, whose baroque films feature extremely bright colours and are full of everything that is outside what is considered normal. We see drug addicts, mentally ill, transvestites, prostitutes, thugs, bull fighters, etc.

Javier Aguilera's gallery of characters belong to the same family. They are outcasts. Wild, sad, abandoned, and battered. People who inhabit the peripheries of what we call normality and respectability.





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# RAW REALISM

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Tom Hermansen MA (History of Art), Art Critic

Javier Aguilera was born in 1969 under the brutal boot heels of general Franco's rule. He grew up in Madrid, watching democracy take shape and receiving undiluted shots of newly won Spanish freedom and vitality directly into his young veins. And freedom is precisely what his work reflects. Looking east and west, he uses everything that catches his fancy. In the west, he has found artists such as Americans Duane Hanson and John de Andrea, whose sculptures in the 1960s reintroduced the powerfully realistic human figure. In the east, he has watched over the shoulders of Japanese artists, and the bubbling manga comic tradition is very clear, especially in his most recent work. He also draws inspiration from Spanish history – with Francisco Goya's horrifying pictures of war and executions as an obvious reference.

But Javier Aguilera's most important reference is the present; his eyes are wide with curiosity, taking in all the people moving around him.

He translates the energy that is the hallmark of his working method into his figures. They live in the no-man's land between introverted stillness and extrovert confrontation. Between silence and noise. We never know the specific story, as the people reveal only part of the trouble. So we don't know who they are fighting. Who they are provoking. Who they are shouting at. Who they are making fun of. Who they are playing up to.

These people are testing the limits, and some observers are sure to think they cross the line with their strong, almost brutal realism. You're not sure if you dare lift the miniskirt to see the masked girl's exposed abdomen. And you don't quite know if you dare approach the dark and partially undressed femme fatale with the arrow buried deep in her side.

This titillating confrontation is the core of Javier Aguilera's work. Not only in his sculptures but also in his drawings and paintings. The author Umberto Eco calls this the poetry of open work. In other words, that the interpretation – the experience of the work of art – takes place in the person standing in front of it. The work therefore has no tangible core for us to find.

the experience of art is an event that plays out again and again between the work and the individual observer. It is a bodily experience. In other words, your clash with Javier Aguilera's bloody, drooling abattoir dogs is not the same as mine.

The question is not so much what Javier Aguilera's figures *are*, but what they *do*.

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PLAYTIME, 2010 / 80CM / RESIN, FIBERGLASS AND FABRIC



"LAST NIGHT PARTY", 2010 / 130X64X35CM / POLYCHROME RESIN, METHACRYLATE, FABRIC AND HAIR



"LAST NIGHT PARTY", 2010 / 130X64X35CM / POLYCHROME RESIN, METHACRYLATE, FABRIC AND HAIR







"KAPOOOWM", 2010 / 105X60X40CM / POLYCHROME RESIN, METHACRYLATE, FABRIC AND HAIR



"KAPOOOWM", 2010 / 105X60X40CM / POLYCHROME RESIN, METHACRYLATE, FABRIC AND HAIR



"YOU'RE IN FASHION DAMIEN HIRST", 2010 / VARIABLE MEASURES / POLYCHROME RESIN, STEEL



"MURAKAMI PUPPIES", 2010 / VARIABLE MEASURES / POLYCHROME RESIN



Javier Aguilera working in his studio









"LITTLE SAMURAI", 2010 / 70X100CM /  
ACRYLIC MARKER ON PAPER



"OLD SCHOOL BOY", 2010 / 70X100CM /  
ACRYLIC MARKER ON PAPER



"FLYING BIKERS", 2010 / 70X100CM /  
ACRYLIC MARKER ON PAPER



"LOVERS", 2010 / 70X100CM /  
ACRYLIC MARKER ON PAPER



"DOG GIRL", 2010 / 100X100CM / OIL ON WOOD





"TOMIKO", 2010 / 50X40CM / OIL ON CANVAS



"TAKEHIKO", 2010 / 50X40CM / OIL ON CANVAS



"SUNDAY MORNING" 2010 / 100X100CM / OIL ON WOOD





"ARTIST IN RESIDENCE", 2010 / VARIABLE MEASURES / POLYCHROME CLAY AND METHACRYLATE



"BIKER I", 2010 / 20X18X13CM / POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER II", 2010 / 20X18X13CM / POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER III", 2010 / 20X18X13CM /  
POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER IV", 2010 / 20X18X13CM /  
POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER VII", 2010 / 20X18X13CM / POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER V", 2010 / 20X18X13CM /  
POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER VI", 2010 / 20X18X13CM /  
POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE



"BIKER VIII", 2010 / 20X18X13CM / POLYCHROME RESIN AND PIGMENTED SILICONE





Javier Aguilera's art comes alive when you move in close to the figures and study them. This is one of his sculptures being observed at the art fair in Madrid in 2009.



Javier Aguilera's nutella girl was one of the most popular exhibits at Art Copenhagen in 2009. "You Only Live Once", 2009. Resin, fibre glass and oil paint. Height 80 cm.



"Violent City", 2009. Resin, fiber glass and oil paint. Hight 90 cm



"Otaku Nights", 2009. 52 x 28 x 25 cm, mixed technic

# CV AND EXHIBITIONS

## JAVIER AGUILERA

Born 1969 in León, Spain

Raised in Madrid

Moved to Vigo 23 years ago.

Lives and works in Vigo

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

### 2010

Otaku Rider, Gallery Poulsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

### 2009

Akira in my head, Gallery Poulsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

### 2008

Triangle Gallery, Barcelona, Spain

### 2005

Disfigurements, Casa Roxa Gallery, Vigo, Spain

### 2004

Humans, Termes Gallery, Vigo, Spain

### 2003

Bad boys, Choco Gallery, Vigo, Spain

### 2001

Vigo Financial Club Gallery, Vigo, Spain

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

### 2010

Copenhaguen Art Fair 2010, The Nordic Art Fair, Gallery Poulsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Poulsen on Paper, Gallery Poulsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Polimorfos Perversos, Fernando Pradilla Gallery, Madrid, Spain

Love Story, Two Heads Chicken Gallery, Evora, Portugal

### 2009

Copenhaguen Art Fair 2009, The Nordic Art Fair, Gallery Poulsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Berliner Liste 09, International Contemporary Art Fair, 3punts Gallery, Berlin, Germany

Art Madrid VI, International Contemporary Art Fair, 3punts Gallery, Pabellon de Cristal de la Casa de Campo, Madrid. Spain

7 na raia, Arte y Bronze Gallery, A Guardia, Pontevedra, Spain

Regrouping Herring, Gallery Poulsen Herring, Copenhagen, Denmark

Summer Group Exhibition 2009, Gallery Poulsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

### 2008

Altered Reality, 3punts Gallery, Barcelona. Spain

Berliner Liste 08, International Contemporary Art Fair, 3punts Gallery, Berlin, Germany

Art Madrid III, International Contemporary Art Fair, 3punts Gallery, Pabellon de Cristal de la Casa de Campo, Madrid. Spain

Cerco 2008. International Contemporary Pottery Art Fair. Zaragoza. Spain

### 2007

Art Madrid II, International Contemporary Art Fair, Clave Gallery, Pabellon Cristal de la Casa de Campo, Madrid. Spain

Realidad o ficcion 9MA Gallery, Barcelona. Spain

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Javier Aguilera working in his studio



"GO TOTORO GO", 2010 / 100X100CM / OIL ON WOOD