

**JOSE MANUEL CIRIA**

***Territorios y Mapas***

**March 30 – May 25, 2019**

Baert Gallery is delighted to present *Territorios y Mapas*, José Manuel Ciria's second exhibition with the gallery.

Born in 1960, Ciria is a central figure in the panorama of Spanish painting of the last three decades. After his early period involved with expressionistic figuration, in the early nineties José Manuel Ciria stabilized his defining abstract poetic program—structured in series—which was the dialogue between the uncontrolled flow of the stain and the rigor of geometry. This, in turn, constituted a critical redefinition of the two fundamental tools of abstract aesthetics of the 20th century. However, the artist's interest in the diversity of iconographic registers as well as his tireless experimentation in the terrain of materials and supports would soon be added to that initial program. Fed by a strong conceptual model, the various combinations José Manuel generated during the nineties, lead to numerous series whose main thematic axes were time and memory.

A large number of the works that compose this series of new paintings are made up of checkerboards with boxes featuring black and aluminum backgrounds and with white and red spots, affected, in each case by the presence of the color black. While the first of the characteristics that define these works is their checkerboard layout, the second is the nature of the pigments' gestural emission, through spots on each of these square field.

The paintings that Ciria presents in this exhibition offer a thorough synthesis of the most significant characteristics of his pictorial language (vibrant colors, strength in the movement, geometrical rigor); while the square format, often uses by Ciria, testify once again of the strong influence of the suprematist Kazimir Malevitch and of the geometric abstractionist Joseph Albers in the artist's work.

While Ciria's gestural style have been known to, on occasion, reach expressive overflow, these new works are instead marked by a certain jubilation. The paintings seems to reflect a period of consolidation, of stability, in which the artist apparently regained new strength after a long period of personal vicissitudes.

Throughout his professional career, Ciria has gained a wide international recognition through solo and group exhibitions, among which are the Herzliya Contemporary Art Museum in Tel Aviv, Israel (2002), the Tretyakov State Gallery in Moscow, Russia (2004), the Polish National Museum of Poland, Warsaw (2004), the Museo de Arte Abstracto Manuel Felguérez in Zacatecas, Mexico (2005), the PasquArt Kunsthalle Art Center Museum in Bern, Switzerland (2005), the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Ateneo de Yucatán in Mérida, Mexico (2006), the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de Buenos Aires, Argentina (2007), the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago de Chile (2009), the Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno (IVAM) (2012), the Heritage Museum (MUPAM), Malaga (2012), the National Museum of Contemporary Art (MINAC), Bucharest (2012) and the Museum of Modern Art (MAMBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina (2013). His work is in numerous institutional and private collections including the National Museum Art Center Reina Sofia (MNCARS), Spain; the Valencian Institute of Modern Art (IVAM), Spain; the Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art, Spain and The Albertina Museum, Austria.

The artist lives and works in Madrid, Spain.