

## Press information

### Néstor Sanmiguel Diest | *Revisitando Enigmas*

13 February – 19 March 2016

Opening: Friday, 12 February 2016, 6 – 9 pm

carlier | gebauer is pleased to announce its first solo exhibition with Spanish artist Néstor Sanmiguel Diest, a founding member of the A Ua Crag collective and a leading figure of the 1980s avant-garde in Aragon.

Sanmiguel Diest began to pursue his artistic practice while initially maintaining a career as a pattern maker. Although the artist has long left his work in the field of applied arts behind, this experience – combined with his voracious interest in literature and philosophy – has exerted a broader influence on Sanmiguel Diest's schematic thinking and the quasi-mathematical structures that inform his creative process.

Sanmiguel Diest constructs his paintings and works on paper as palimpsests, alternately layering strata of found materials like magazine clippings, newspapers, industrial reports, mail, formulas, and texts atop one another in interplay with layers of ink, paint, graphite, solvents, and ballpen. The artist has developed a lexicon of lines and patterns that he uses to formally delimit fragmented spaces, a practice that carries throughout his oeuvre. He wields superimposed layers of information as screens, simultaneously revealing or hiding a succession of pictorial stories or texts. The series *El Suicidio de Lucrecia* (the Suicide of Lucrecia) – which refers to a historical legend that has been an enduring subject for visual artists, including Titian, Rembrandt, and Botticelli – teems with meticulous systems of lines that vertically bisect the picture plane.

Sanmiguel Diest's at times hermetic and highly personal conception of art has resulted in a nuanced vocabulary of methodologies and symbols. Like German artist Hanne Darboven, who employed personally derived numerical systems in the creation of her artworks, Sanmiguel Diest's paintings and drawings have an algorithmic quality. However, if we consider an algorithm to be a finite process with a fixed symbolic vocabulary governed by precise instructions, then Sanmiguel Diest's algorithm's are unstable, constantly stuttering and re-aligning themselves as the repetition of one process unlocks new, unpredictable effects. Sanmiguel Diest employs literature – and text more broadly – as a plastic instrument. The writings of references as diverse as the sci-fi master Stanislaw Lem, the Dada poet Tristan Tzara, or French symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé have all provided inspirations for his work. Sanmiguel Diest refers to these sources, and the formal process of layering different materials atop one another, as working with overlapping layers of "contaminated information" – simultaneous events entangled in one another, "soaked by rain."

**Néstor Sanmiguel Diest (born 1949)** lives and works in Aranda de Duero. At first his art practice revolved around actions, documents, paintings, texts and manifestos linked to collectives such as A Ua Crag and Red District. In the 1990s he began to focus exclusively on the medium of painting. Sanmiguel Diest's work has been collected by Tate, MACBA, Museo Reina Sofía, and MUSAC, among others. He has exhibited his work at MUSAC (2007), and has also taken part in the recent exhibition *Locus Solus: Impressiones de Raymond Roussel* at the Museo Reina Sofía (MNCARS).

