

Cristina Rodriguez jump into reality



MacLean

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY FINE ART



EMBAJADA DE COLOMBIA

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A TRIBUTE TO LIFE

Cristina Rodrlguez's artwork is a tribute to life. Highly charged with sentiments, her immense paintings are full of colour, of feeling, and, above all, faith.

I only became acquainted with Cristina's work recently when she invited me to her studio. I had no hesitation in giving her my support because Cristina Rodriguez belongs to that talented generation of dedicated Colombian artists who have an urge to express themselves and an intense desire to speak through their paintings.

At her studio I discovered this collection that is here on display for you. A tribute to human life, these paintings depict the various stages of life and their significance – love that leads to the birth of man and the inception of ideas, youth, creation, the laborious path to strengthening character, the consolidation of existence, the fulfilment of dreams and the certainty of death.

Through her art, Cristina Rodriguez seeks to portray the human being – the Colombian human being and, at the same time, the universal human being, who shares one single way of communication, one single origin, one single sentiment, one single condition that unites and draws all human beings together.

Cristina Rodriguez's work stirs up nostalgic feelings and delves into deep personal and collective experiences. Her paintings are a stream of sensations that, according to our Colombian Nobel prizewinner Garcia Marquez "squeeze out sentiments".

I think Cristina is attempting to portray the sacred presence of human beings and our need for others. Therefore, when she told me that she had put a lot of herself into each stroke, on looking at her paintings I discovered that there was also a lot of Colombia in each brushstroke and, in particular, of Colombia's need for others.

June 2001

Victor G. Ricardo Colombian Ambassador in the UK

The Meals traces the transition from the timeless ritual of breastfeeding through to the highly acculturated world of the tea-party, in which toddlers imitate the grown-ups and prepare to take their place in the wider social world.

Many of the images are intensely specific, recalling moments of great significance to Rodriguez. *The Nursery* depicts a series of childhood toys – little objects of almost infinite value. “When you have a child,” explains Rodríguez, “you recognise the importance of a plastic duck – if the duck disappears, it’s a major disaster in a home”. There are delightful evocations of holidays, such as the luminous *The Picnic in the Highlands*.

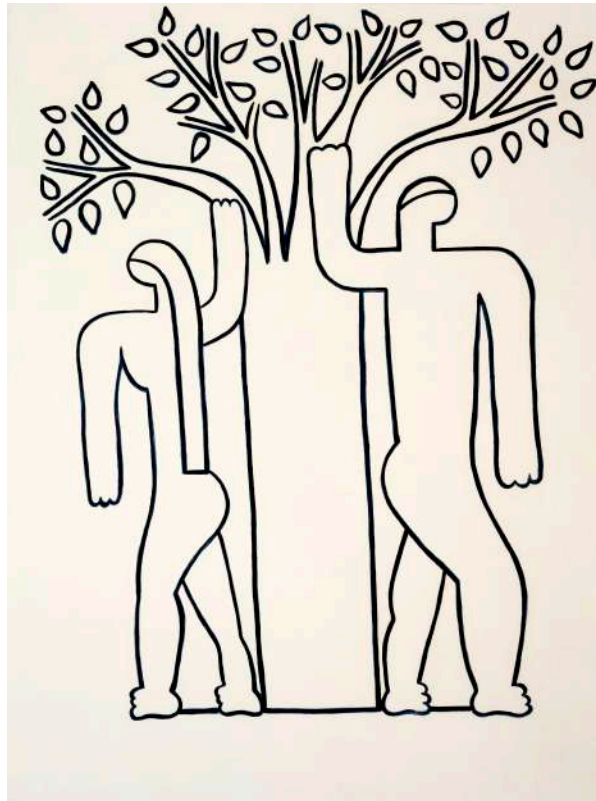
Meanwhile *Four Moments in One Morning* recalls the unforgettable moment when a baby takes his first steps, watched over by his father. At one level, it’s an impeccably skillful composition. Shifting horizon-lines mean that at one moment we’re with the father, looking down at the baby, while in the next we’re down near the floor, observing life from a baby’s-eye view. The red flower that blossoms in each of the four panels remains unchanged, bearing witness to the speed of transition from crawling infant to fully ambulatory, autonomous personhood. But there’s more than mere skill here. “This series gives me so much tenderness” says Rodriguez, her face softening as she turns towards the canvases depicting her husband and son; looking at her, you know she means it.

London is also there, very evidently, in *Jump into Reality*. One series of panels which revolves around play – *The Pond*, *The Playground* and *Lunchtime* – is full of literal detail

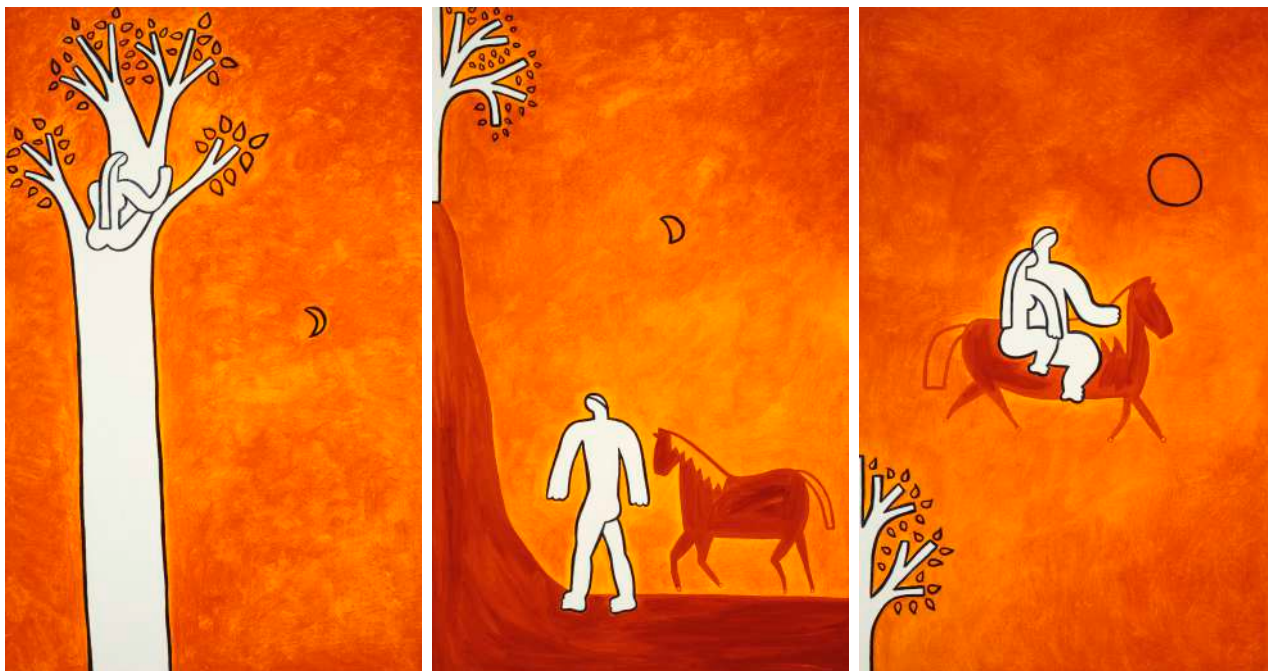
borrowed from Ravenscourt Park, where Rodriguez has spent many happy hours with her son. The pond with the tree in the middle, the above-ground Tube line, the frozen hands of the cupola clock these are talismanic details transcribed from real life in a particular place, although the general sense of movement and fresh-air high spirits will be recognisable to anyone. Likewise, *Supermarket with a View* takes what one might assume was a fairly prosaic reality – the Ladbroke Grove Sainsburys – and finds wonder in the displays of food, the nearby canal, the floating domesticity of the canal barges. If you’ve never been there, it’s still a delightful picture, but for those who know the place well, it’s pure enchantment.

And this is the key to the distinctive nature of Rodriguez’s work – a happy and fruitful marriage between the specific and the universal, held together with the odd miracle. “I think the more personal things are, the more universal they are,” she says, and her paintings reflect this. They evoke a world where the marvellous is an everyday occurrence – a world where mermaids and centaurs seem no more (and no less) magical than ducks and squirrels, where a north London supermarket radiates the glamorous exoticism of a story-book kingdom, and where the experience of giving birth transforms everything. It is, in other words, everyday reality as we know it – but shot through with glimmering strands of pure magic.

Bunny Smedley
Critic and Historian
July 2001



The Woman, The Man, The Tree, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Conquest, triptych, oil on linen, each 122 x 77cm, 2001



The Passion, triptych, oil on linen, one 122 x 153cm, each of the others 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Marriage, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Miracle, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Family, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Pond, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Playground, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



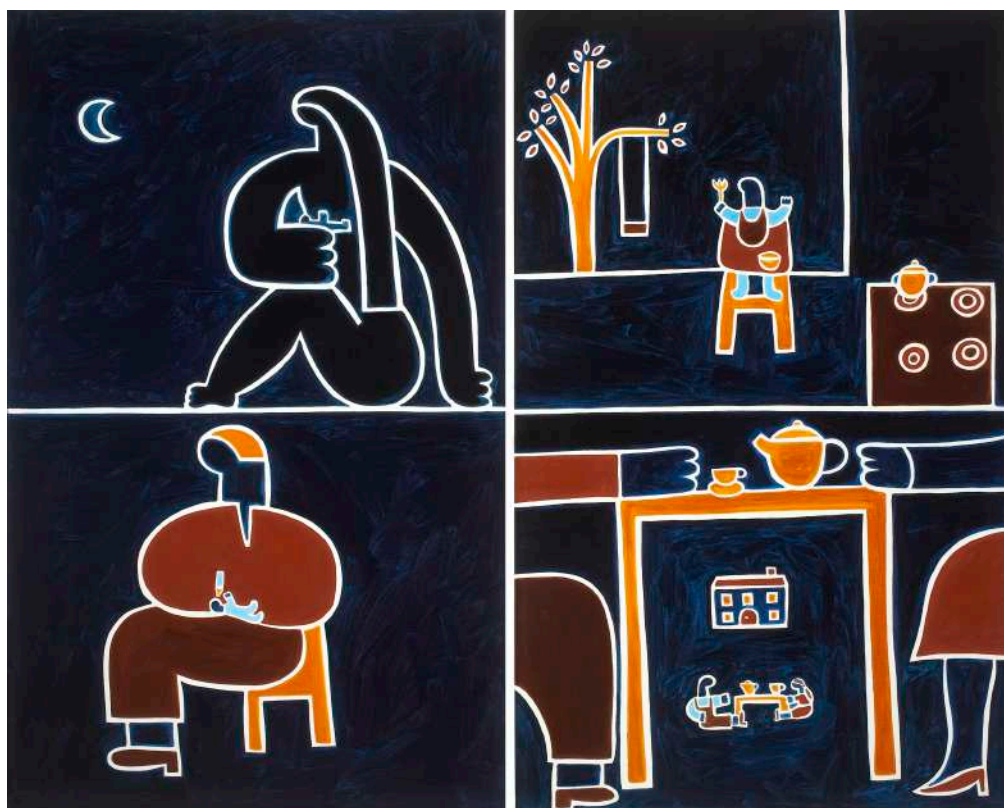
Lunchtime, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Park, oil on linen, 122 x 77cm, 2001



The Nursery, oil on linen, 122 x 77cm, 2001



The Meats, diptych, oil on linen, each 122 x 77cm, 2001



The Supermarket with a View, diptych, oil on linen, each 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Picnic in The Highlands, oil on linen, each 122 x 153cm, 2001



In Florida with the Crocodiles, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



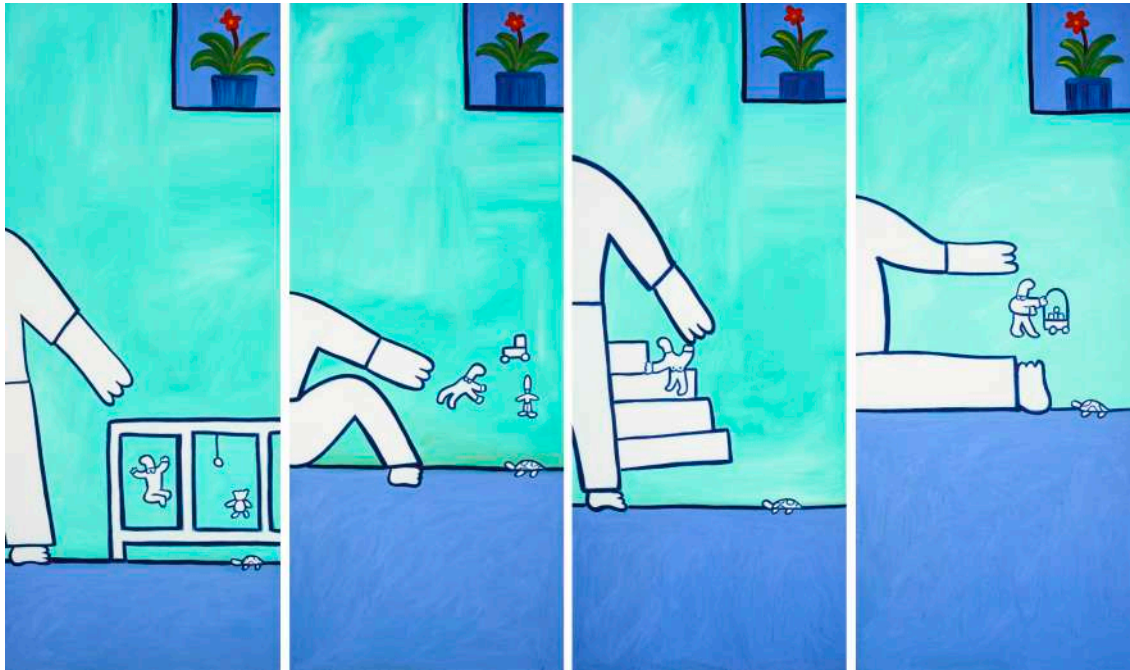
Watching the Whale play with the Blondes, oil on linen, 122 x 92cm, 2001



The Bathers, oil on linen, 122 x 153cm, 2001



Father and Child and Mermaid, oil on linen, 122 x 77cm, 2001



Four Moments in One Morning, set of four works, oil on linen, each 122 x 51cm, 2001



Happy Birthday To You, oil on linen, 122 x 153cm, 2001

Cristina Rodriguez Born Colombia 1964

EDUCATION

- 1983-87 BA in Fine Arts, University of Los Andes, Bogota, Colombia
1989-91 MA in Fine Arts, The Slade School of Fine Arts, London University

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1987 *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Fundacion Alzate Avendano, Bogota, Colombia
1991 *My Gift to a Continent*, Cadogan Gallery, London
1997 *The Carnival of the Animals*, The Pump House Gallery, London
1999 *La Fête sous la Pyramide*, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris
1999 Hiscox Art Café, London
2001 *Jump into Reality*, MacLean Fine Art, The Air Gallery, London

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1987 *Los Nuevos Pintores de Bogota*, Centro Colombo Americano, Bogota, Colombia
1988 *Nuevas Tendencias*, Galeria Ventana, Cali, Colombia
1989 *30 Anos de Arte Biblioteca*, Luis Angel Arango, Bogota, Colombia
1990 *Contemporary View*, The Royal College of Art and Christie's, London
1991 *The Discerning Eye*, The Mall Gallery, London
 Under the Eye of Saturn, Oriel Mostyn Gallery, Llandudno, Wales
1992 *The Ship of Fools*, Acorn Gallery, Liverpool
1993 *Summer Show*, Delfina Studios, London
 The Affordable Art Company, Connaught Brown, London
 Delta Gallery Exhibition, Delta Gallery, Harare, Zimbabwe
1994 *The Affordable Art Company*, Connaught Brown, London
1997 *The Affordable Art Company*, Connaught Brown, London

AWARDS

- 1989 *Scholarship for Outstanding Artists*, Ictetex: Government of Colombia
1990 *The British Council Scholarship*
1992 *The Delfina Studios Scholarship*, Delfina Studios Trust. (One year.)
1993 Travel Scholarship to Zimbabwe, Delfina Studios Trust
1995 Travel Scholarship to New York, Delfina Studios Trust

Her work is in private collections in: Colombia, Mexico, Peru, USA, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Belgium, France, Portugal, Zimbabwe.



Cristina Rodriguez

jump into reality

The Air Gallery
32 Dover Street
London W1X 3RA

17–22 September, 2001

Monday – Friday:

10am – 6pm

Saturday:

11am – 4pm

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