

GALERÍA ELVIRA GONZÁLEZ

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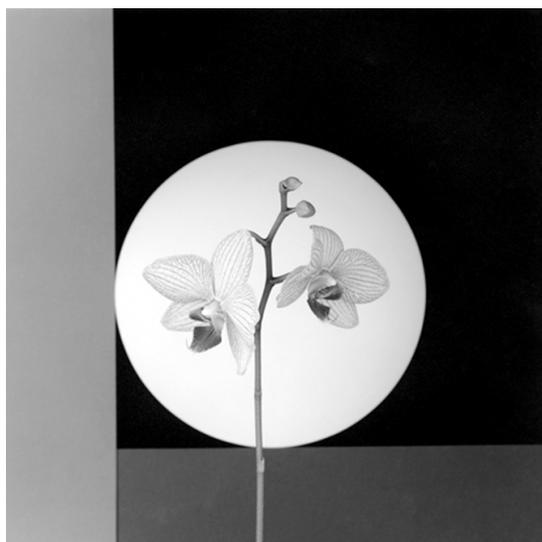
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ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE

La mirada de Pedro Almodóvar

Exhibition from June 7th to July 22nd 2011

Opening Tuesday June 7th at 7 pm



Orchid, 1988

- The exhibition consists of 31 photographs, selected by filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar.
- As of January 2011, Galería Elvira González exclusively represents Robert Mapplethorpe in Spain.

Galería Elvira González is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition *Robert Mapplethorpe. La mirada de Pedro Almodóvar* by the US artist Robert Mapplethorpe. Undertaken by Pedro Almodóvar, the selection features 31 photographs from different periods spanning from 1976 to 1989, in silver gelatin and dye transfer colour prints. The exhibition is included within the Off Photoespaña Festival 2011.

For this exhibition Galería Elvira González has invited the Spanish filmmaker to cast his particular gaze over the work of Mapplethorpe from various different angles, conceiving the show as a set of groups of images dialoguing with each other.

Almodóvar's gaze has focused primarily on the human body and the geometry of the space surrounding it. Like Mapplethorpe himself, the film director views flower compositions, nudes and still lifes as the ultimate expression of the concept of beauty.

As the filmmaker notes "*Mapplethorpe's photography has the visual intensity proper to painting and, at once, is the co-opting by photography of the narrative potential we used to associate with painting*".

Since early 2011, Galería Elvira González is the exclusive representative of Robert Mapplethorpe in Spain. The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation was established by the artist in 1988 to promote photography, support museums exhibiting photography-based art, as well as to fund medical research in the fight against AIDS and HIV-related infections.

Most recently, the Foundation has announced that the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the J. Paul Getty Trust made a joint acquisition of art and archival materials by or associated with Robert Mapplethorpe. The vast majority of the acquisition comes in the form of a generous gift from the Mapplethorpe Foundation, and the remainder from funds provided by The David Geffen Foundation and the J. Paul Getty Trust.

The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation has worked alongside Galería Elvira González in organising the exhibition.

The underground photographer

The vast, provocative and powerful work of Robert Mapplethorpe (New York, 1946-1989) has recognized him as a major contributor in the art of photography from the second half of the 20th century. Mapplethorpe started using photography from a very early stage. At the beginning of the 70's he experimented with drawing, painting and collage, before eventually finding his artistic medium in photography.

His first solo show *Polaroids* took place in New York at the Light Gallery in 1973. Two years later the curator Sam Wagstaff, who was to become his partner and benefactor, offered him a Hasselblad medium-format camera which he used with his circle of friends and acquaintances: artists, musicians, New York socialites, porn stars and members of the underground S&M subculture.

He also worked on commercial commissions, like the art for album covers by Patti Smith and Television. He also made commissioned portraits and contributed to *Interview* magazine.

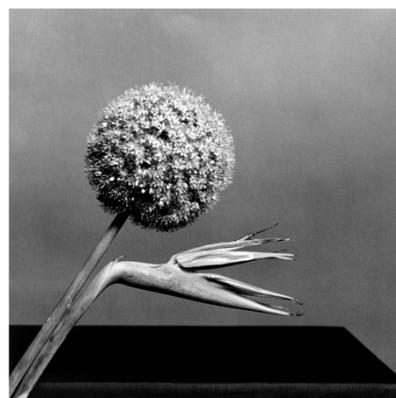
Throughout the 80's, Mapplethorpe produced a wide body of work. His images challenged the beholder's vision while at once dovetailing with a classical aesthetic: stylised compositions of male and female nudes, delicate floral still life, as well as studio portraits of celebrities and artists, to touch on some of his most well known genres. Mapplethorpe arranged several of his male nude models on a pedestal, as if they were sculptures.

Robert Mapplethorpe introduced and refined various techniques and formats in photography, including 20 x 24 inch colour Polaroids, photogravure, platinum prints on paper and linen, Cibachrome and dye transfer colour prints.

Galería Elvira González is preparing a publication with texts by the US novelist and poet **Siri Hustvedt** based on Pedro Almodóvar's selection of Robert Mapplethorpe's work.



Tulip, 1985



Bird of Paradise, 1979

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