

GXGALLERY

CARLOS CORTES

BLACK BOX





# Carlos Cortes

**G X G A L L E R Y**

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## BLACK BOX

*In an airplane or helicopter, the flight recorder records the conversation of the pilots and also logs information about controls and sensors. If an accident happens, investigators can use the recordings to assist in the investigation.*

In his childhood, Carlos Cortes was brought up as a Catholic. Sitting in churches, bored by the sermon, he would escape to other places through the numerous paintings and sculptures that decorate every church in Spain. Gold, blood, body parts, crucifixions and ecstasy...

These early religious experiences are reflected in his interest in altarpieces. The spiritual value of an object inspiring devotion is combined with an exciting setting: painting and sculpture in a dynamic dialogue with architecture and the congregation.

Carlos Cortes' paintings have always been a form of storytelling. Whether it's directly, through long titles that add a different contemplative dimension to the images or through the characters themselves. They speak to us with strange and colourful outfits and outlandish scenarios. But these are not real characters - they're rather figures that represent ideas - ambassadors of symbolic worlds.

Carlos' pictorial tales share a common background with other storytellers like Edward Hopper and Piero de la Francesca. They are quiet tableaux where space and allegorical characters conjugate layers of information and often conflicting narratives. Their static presence is pregnant with hidden drama. Like the silence of the volcano - the hot magma always there under many layers of rock. Unseen and unstable. A force that may erupt at some point in time. Big Bang! Pompeii. Buried under the ashes.

It is only recently after many years of painting that Carlos realized that his creative work has always functioned as a kind of tracking device. His long quest for healing began when as a teenager he experienced the traumatic loss of his beloved brother. His journey thereafter criss-crossing the landscape of his life.

When your soul becomes a wreck you have to find a way of putting the pieces together. You probably look for other survivors or you try and trace the marks left by accidents and events that shaped things around you.

*In the end, you are always trying to find 'The Black Box'. – Cortes*

Most of Carlos' paintings act as recordings of muted conversations, tracking the underlying forces that shape our lives and inform our decision making process.

Buried in our unconscious, are secret voices that we very rarely are able to hear. These paintings go a long way in revealing some of those last minutes before the silence of reality spreads its wings again.

There is also a performing, interacting element, present in many of his works. These black boxes demand something from the spectator: they have a double life as wooden 3D sculptures, and as 2D paintings. Their doors are made of fragments of other people's lives, bits of furniture, door and window frames, flooring boards...some smashed, torn or broken. Accidents, scratches, dents, recordings of everyday dramas that continue their journey by becoming part of an artwork. Doors that reveal hidden truths. A secret window to another space which can be opened or closed.

Quiet and introspective characters that ask you, the viewer to decide. You can watch or you can hide. You can keep it to yourself or you can share it with others. They move when you move or speak to you when you want, often causing one to smile. These are dancing paintings, that interact with the environment in a playful architectural game.

Despite everything, the work always has humour. They also tend to be small artworks to allow one to travel with them. A little suitcase. You can play again, make the same choices, just somewhere else.

Their images will not leave you.

BLACK BOX



Fray Telesforo wrote  
the memories that lead  
to the revolution

Oil on wood & found objects  
37 x 21 x 7.5 cm





The Count. The silence.

Oil on wood & found objects  
33 x 15 x 10.5 cm





The arrival of Zanair meant  
that everything changed

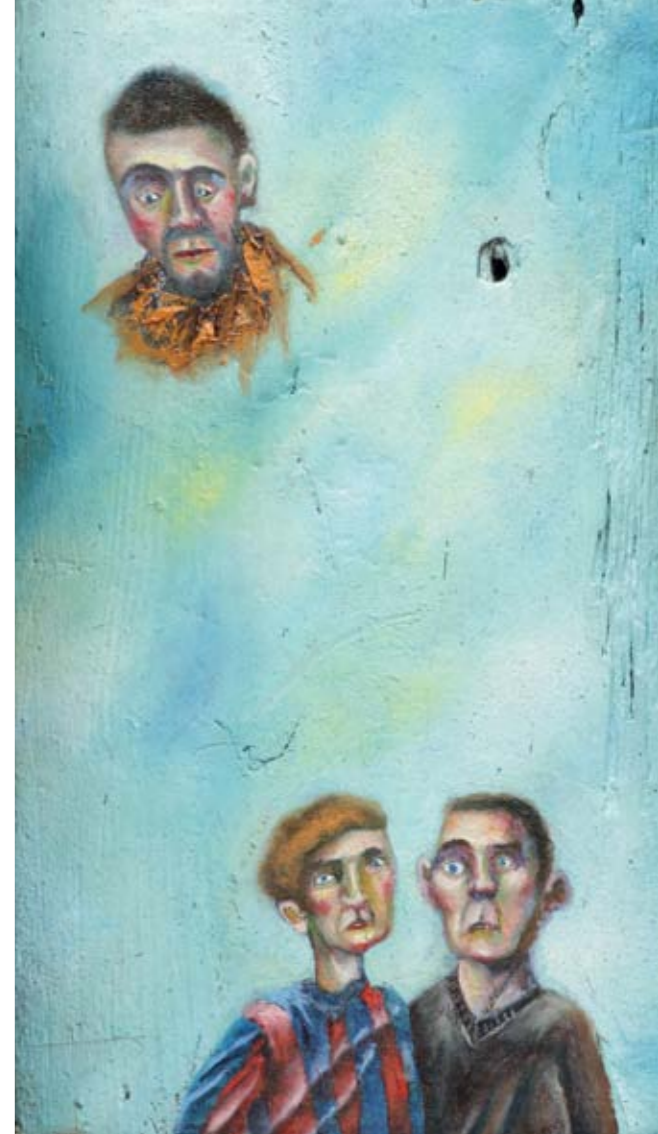
Oil on wood & found objects  
45 x 21 x 5.5 cm





A father's fear for his two sons,  
the goalkeeper and the defender

Oil on wood & found objects  
34.5 x 29.5 x 8 cm







Midnight Cowboy  
Oil on wood & found objects  
34.5 x 16 x 5 cm





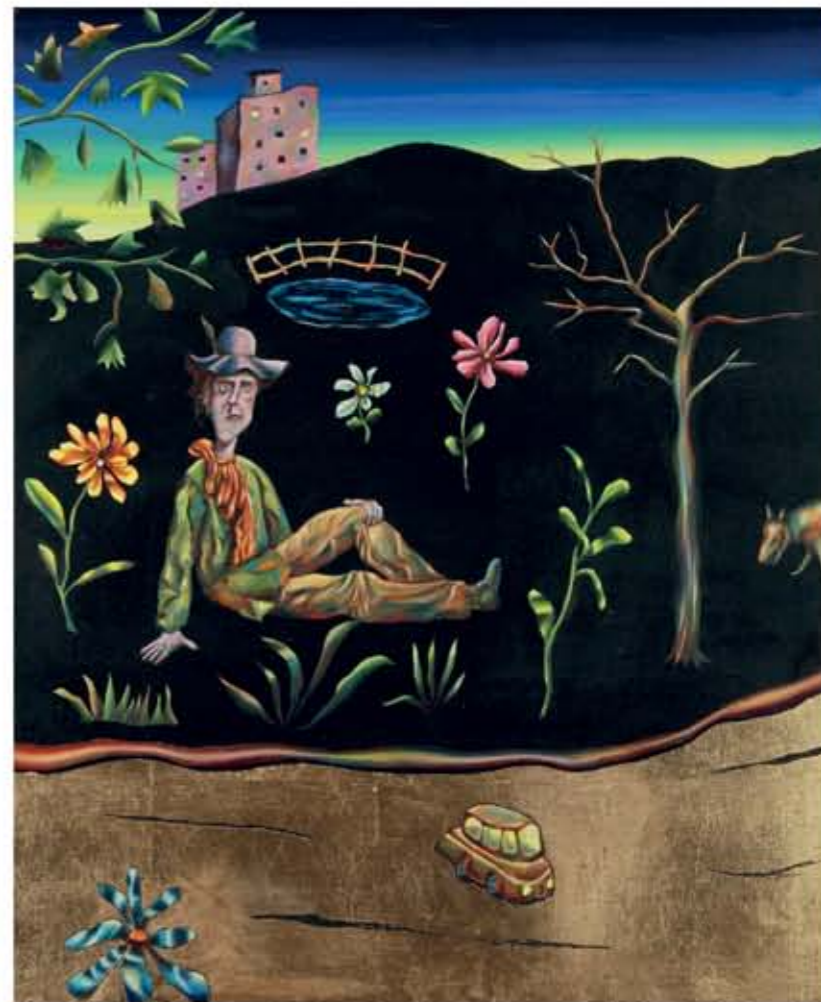
Superman and an angry angel

Oil on wood  
45 x 33 x 2 cm



A Batman with tits was bound  
to generate controversy

Oil on wood  
42 x 39 x 2 cm



In the Night Garden Tryptich Oil on wood and found objects 80 x 280 x 5 cm

Flowers on the pavement

Oil on wood  
41 x 51 cm



Mary and Joseph

Oil on wood  
55 x 27 x 2 cm





Boy with Flowers  
Blind Reader 1

Oil on wood and found objects  
25 x 25 cm



Blind Reader Tryptich (detail)

Oil on wood and found objects,  
polychromed jesmonite  
92 x 190 x 12 cm



If you take me, I'll respond

Oil on wood & found objects  
42 x 24 x 8 cm



Man in green apron

Oil on wood & found objects  
26 x 14.5 x 7 cm



I was adamant no one  
should cross the river

Oil on wood & found objects  
33 x 31 x 12 cm



A life full of colour  
meant nothing now.

Oil on wood & found objects  
23.5 x 23 x 6 cm







He is upset  
He ran away with the money

Oil on wood & found objects  
38 x 20,5 x 7,5 cm

Man in green vest

Oil on wood  
22,7 x 7,5 x 1 cm





He realised that what he left  
behind was no better than what  
awaited him in the future

Oil on wood & found objects  
30 x 15,5 x 6,5 cm





Lady Chatterley  
Oil on wood and found objects  
70 x 140 x 5 cm



The man with no name  
Oil on wood and found objects  
70 x 140 x 5 cm



There is that much you can do  
when your soul is stapled

Oil on wood and found objects  
70 x 42 x 7 cm





When the flood comes

Oil on wood & found objects  
47 x 42 x 8 cm

Frontispiece

GX is proud to present new works by Carlos Cortes.

Established in 2001, GX is a contemporary fine art gallery specialising in artists with a focus on contemporary abstract figurative and participates in National and International Art fairs. Our London gallery is located in a 1500 sq. ft. Grade II listed building in London's historic Camberwell arts district and is architecturally a unique platform for contemporary artwork. The gallery is within walking distance of Camberwell Arts College, South London Art Gallery, Goldsmiths College and approximately 10 minutes from Victoria Station.

Our aim is to share contemporary art knowledge and art making in its current form through dedicated spaces and significant global art events. GX also supports local educational institutions and introduce new faces through an annual program.

The gallery represents a roster of artists specialising in thematic group exhibitions and focused solo shows. Clients can be confident that GX artists are selected based on their inclusion in public and private collections. The gallery also offers a wide range of services including commercial and residential installations, artwork restoration, resale or direct purchase of single pieces or collections of important contemporary work.

GX Framing ([www.gxframing.com](http://www.gxframing.com)) offers museum-quality bespoke framing.

***For enquiries and sales please contact***

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