

Andres Galeano could just as well have become a prolific collector instead of an artist. Walking into his studio is akin to entering a wonderful Cabinet of curiosities, with an immaculate attention to detail that's to be expected of a professional collector. Antique figurines, a dead jarred lizard, and other atypical objects of all denominations are neatly arranged on shallow shelves. Thousands of photographs sit in clean piles in boxes, seemingly to no end. The Catalanian Kunsthochschule Weissensee graduate shared insights into his upcoming show.



What are all the photos for?

My new work deals with analogue photography and appropriation of found material. Looking at so many photo albums I recognize repeated stereotypes. I use the stereotypes and repetitive motifs by combining and recomposing the images, almost like putting together a puzzle. There is a very precise order and the work is very obsessive. I work for short, intense periods, otherwise it's too exhausting.

What kinds of motifs interest you?

I'm interested in portraying human ways of ascending to heaven, but on earth, and the desire to fly. I like using mistakes, like overexposures, or fingers on the lens. I don't think it's a mistake, rather a new way to approach it. For example I look at a mistake and say, ok, this is not a mistake, this is great, how can I highlight this, and elevate it, take advantage of it?

Do you ever make mistakes?

Without making mistakes you are a prisoner of yourself. Mistakes as well as collaborations push you further. I also think it helps people identify with the work because anyone could have taken these pictures. However when I collect pictures for a certain motif, I turn it into something new because of the combination.

The works are often quite humorous

Humor? I think it's horrible when you try to be funny or try to be ironic. Humor is important to me, but the humor comes from the poetry in seeing something differently than how it was originally intended.

Why rescue trash?

I like the sensibility of used things. They have a history, a life. Some galleries asked me to scan images and enlarge them, but that perverts the original spirit. I'm saying, look at this the way it is, intimately. It's an alchemist way of working to turn trash and shit into gold. It has no value until I give it value.