

PERROTIN

PRESSBOOK

Iván ARGOTE

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Ivan Argote Is An Artist, Not A Counterrevolutionary

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Arts & Entertainment



Guillaume Zicarelli Courtesy of the Artist and Perrotin

Iván Argote
"La Venganza Del Amor" exhibition view

I wasn't sure what to expect before I met [Ivan Argote](#). I read in an essay accompanying a catalogue of his works that he was raised on a revolutionary commune in Colombia in the 1980s. I suppose that what I expected as a result was Gael García Bernal with a scraggly beard. Or at the very least, someone very serious and angry.

Instead, Ivan Argote was open-faced, and quick to smile. He greeted me at the entrance to [Galerie Perrotin's](#) new space on the Lower East Side. The room where we met was still under construction. Argote exchanged pleasantries with the workers in rapid fire Spanish before leading me in the back gallery, where his exhibition "La Venganza Del Amor" was already installed. The show will open on April 27, and run through June 11, 2017.

"I'm very shy," he stated a few minutes later, and then quickly changed his mind. "I'm not shy. I'm a very easy to speak with, everybody, the guys here, anyone." He was telling me about how he first met Emmanuel Perrotin. It was 2009, and Argote was a graduate student at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris. He approached Perrotin at an opening, and told the gallerist that he should check out his work. Perrotin handed him a card. Three months later, Argote was eating breakfast when he received an invitation from Perrotin to come show his work at the gallery. The meeting went well; Perrotin asked Argote if he'd like to collaborate. "I was like, 'Sure,'" Argote said. "And he was like, 'Ok, don't expect much.'"

Low expectations or not, Argote's career took off from there. He had his first solo exhibition at Perrotin in Paris in 2011, and his work has since been featured in the São Paulo Biennial and the Palais de Tokyo, among many other

venues. In choosing him to open its new space at 130 Orchard Street, the esteemed gallery, which also represents Sophie Calle, Maurizio Cattelan and Jean-Michel Othoniel, is implicitly stating that Argote is of great value to their stable.



Courtesy of the Artist and Perrotin

Iván Argote
"As Far As We Could Get", 2017 Video HD

"La Venganza Del Amor," which translates into "Love's Revenge," consists of entirely new works, some from continuous series. The highlight of the show is the twenty-minute documentary *As far as we could get* (2017), which Argote filmed in Palembang, Indonesia, and Neiva, Colombia. The two places are exact antipodes, which means that if you dug a straight line from one through the center of the planet, you would arrive at the other. In each place, Argote interviewed people born on November 9, 1989, the same day that the Berlin Wall came down. He is interested not in how they relate to the event, but instead, how even important dates in history tell only a miniscule fraction of the story of life on Earth. "Life is so diverse, so complex," he told me. "[The Berlin Wall falling] is important, but it's also important to rebalance."

Re-examining history from new perspectives is central to Argote's work. Not necessarily to change the dominant narrative, which he acknowledges is shaped by various forms of economic, political and militaristic power, but instead, to imbue the individual with relevance. "We don't have much time here," he told me. "We kind of have to be responsible for all of this history. It's not like we need to change it. We need to deal with it. It's important to try to negotiate the distance. To feel like we matter just a little bit."