

Art Review

April 2009

Hernan Bas

The Dance of the Machine Gun & Other Forms of Unpopular Expression, 23 April – 10 July, Lehmann Maupin, New York

Hernan Bas: Works from the Rubell Family Collection, until 24 May, Brooklyn Museum, New York

By Skye Sherwin

Hernan Bas's paintings possess the kind of giddy beauty and endearing sincerity one associates with highly strung teens. The work is realized in expressive, even slapdash brushstrokes and an enticing palette; what Bas might lack in mastery of his medium he makes up for in his heartfelt engagement with his subject matter, rethinking culture through a gay perspective. Bathers, huntsmen and Hardy Boys are among those frolicking in his erotic, fantastical works, which variously tap the nineteenth-century decadence explored by aesthetes such as Oscar Wilde or J.K. Huysmans, contemporary fashion photography and queer theory. This month he takes New York, with a retrospective of his works culled from the collection of Miami super-collectors the Rubells, currently at the Brooklyn Museum, and a further exhibition opening at Lehmann Maupin. The new series is entitled *The Dance of the Machine Gun*, evoking the work of the Futurist Filippo Marinetti, whose wild dreams for a new artistic order and fixation on youthful energy make him a typical Bas figure.