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November 17, 2009 [RSS](#)



Portfolio of the Week: Diego Lorenzini

The young Chilean illustrator Diego Lorenzini likes to draw using the simplest of materials: a ballpoint pen on notebook paper. The results are drawings with rawness and immediacy, that even despite this modesty of medium -- or because of it -- betray a fine illustrative skill, a playful sense of humor and a fascinating creative imagination. We picked him out of the vast colorful masses at this year's Illustrative Berlin exhibition as one to watch. Read on to find out why.



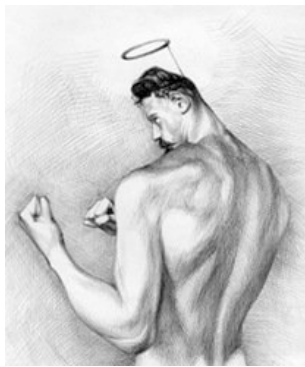
MINI Space: Can you tell us a little bit about your approach and technique?

Diego Lorenzini: I draw.

I draw with cheap stationery materials. This way, the public can identify with my work; everyone has drawn on A4 paper. Everyone knows how to do it. The unsophisticated technique allows me to show a naked drawing. Another advantage of the stationery materials is their scale, which lets me travel with my work.

I'm currently working a lot with a ballpoint pen because I don't want to make preview sketches. That way I obligate myself to work with my mistakes. I naturally work very fast but I try to slow myself down, and often revisit the same piece more than once.

I don't think I have a particular style, but my work is definitely realistic -- sometimes in a more photographic way, and sometimes more iconic. I have a Catholic background and I think the way I use a symbolic language comes from there.



La Espera (2009; Ballpoint pen on paper)

I'm very interested in the serious part of doing funny things.

MS: When did you decide to be an artist, to study art? Was there a person who motivated you?

DL: I went to Santiago de Chile to study art at university when I was seventeen. It wasn't a difficult decision -- on the contrary, it was an organic process. As far as I can remember, I always liked to draw, so it was more about *where* to study than *what* to study.

I think my father motivated me the most. He doesn't have anything to do with art, but he wanted me to be good at something and it was quite clear that that 'something' was being an artist. I thought, and I still think, that you can only be really good at something if you really like doing it.

And well...If I'm wrong and I'm not that good, at least I had a good time.

MS: You've lived in Chile, Argentina, Berlin, London. Is location important to your art? Do you feel that your style has been influenced by coming into contact with so many different "scenes" or cultures?

DL: I don't like to travel, but I enjoy very much to live in different places. That's mainly because nowadays it's not an option to live in an isolated society that isn't influenced by others, and I prefer to see those influences in the flesh rather than on the Internet.

I don't know how my style has been changed by living in different places. Probably it has had more to do with being alone than coming into contact with "scenes". Actually, I'm very bad at getting involved in "scenes", even though I would like to. When you are in another place you spend so long being by yourself. So much more than when you are in your hometown-and that can be very useful when you



The Girl, One of the Neighbours (2009;

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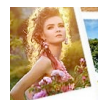
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draw. (ballpoint pen and markers on layers of tracing paper)

Obviously you are influenced by the new culture: the new girls, the new boys, the new trends, the new languages, the new religions, the new museums, the new books, etc. Surprisingly, though, when I was in Berlin, I thought my drawings started to come out more Chilean than ever.

MS: Would you consider yourself a political artist -- do you have a specific message or certain themes that you focus on?

DL: I don't consider myself a political artist, but that doesn't mean my work, like any other, can't be political.

Art and politics are two very different things, and one should try to respect them for what they are. Even though it sometimes seems to be the other way around, I think the artist tries to capture reality and the politician tries to change it. That said, one might find that sometimes the best way to change something is to show that thing as it is.

But I don't put all my attention into that layer of my work...and if you're looking for gossip, I don't like the artists who do.

If there is some political theme in my work, it is that now I'm consciously "materialistic" with my craftsmanship; I work to make the materials last. It is insane to think how many technological things are made with an expiration date on purpose.

MS: Your work was just displayed at [Illustrative Berlin 2009](#). What it was like for you to be involved in this event?

DL: Illustrative is a very interesting exhibition because it is curated with the purpose of showing the contemporary development of those classical disciplines that have jumped from the fine-art field into others.

For many artists, illustration is a bunker where they can keep investigating subjects excluded by the fine-art world. It is nice to see how many talented people work to get the best out of their technique and not to disarm it in a tautological manner.

MS: Do you have any major passions or hidden talents outside of the visual arts?

DL: Well, I'm very good at Spanish and I also write songs. I play and I sing in a band called Varios Artistas. We met at the School of Art in Santiago. We play non-experimental music from Chile, and we are quite good.

We are working on our first official record, but there is still a lot to do because we want it to be a beautiful object.

MS: What inspires you?

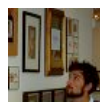
DL: A joke without an end.
A caricature without a model.
Free stuff.
My brother Joaquín.



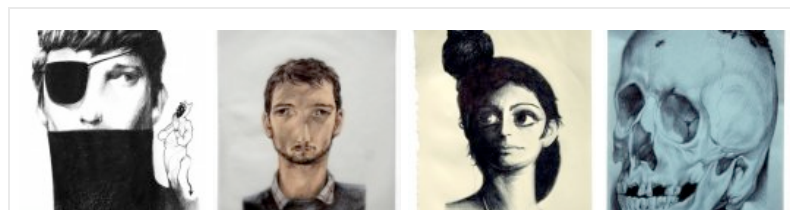
Untitled (2009; Ballpoint pen on paper)



Untitled (2008; Ballpoint pen on paper)



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by [Elisabeth Fertig](#)

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