



PRESS RELEASE:
José-María Cano's 'Captain Thunder'
9th February – 10th March 2007

Allsop Contemporary is pleased to present its forthcoming exhibition, José-María Cano's 'Captain Thunder'. This will be the artist's second solo show with the gallery following on from the success of Masturbation in 2006.

Capitán Trueno (Captain Thunder) is the most popular Spanish comic of all time. At its peak in the 60s it sold more than 170,000 copies weekly. The hero is a 12th Century knight-errant who travels the world enforcing justice and freedom against bullies and tyrants. He is accompanied on his travels by his faithful friends Crispin and Goliath whilst the Viking Princess, Sigrid of Thule is never far from his side. The comic book was first produced in red, white and black in 1956 and was never translated into English. Cano consumed this hero's journeys avidly as a young boy; now, as adult retaining the ideological lessons of youth, has decided to recreate one of the comic's early escapades in English for this show. With echoes of Lichtenstein and pop art icons, Cano will encase the gallery space in twelve large scale reproductions rendered in signature encaustic technique: an immuring wax graphic novel.

The simple story of good overcoming evil has been lifted from 60s comic book (and Cano's childhood) and translated (literally and conceptually) to gallery setting. By reproducing Captain Thunder the series can be said to be part of Cano's desire to gesture towards the simplicity of youth in his paintings (evidenced previously in his appropriations of his son's works), tracing the artistic efforts of previous Spanish painters such as Joan Miro. Here he uses his own childhood as source material – a sign perhaps that Cano's development as an artist is pushing him to reveal more of himself through his meticulous duplicates, each frame acting as both appropriation and memoir.

Or translation and interpretation: this source material has undergone one significant change. The original Spanish text now appears in English. Undoubtedly, Cano's decision to translate the comic into English is a nod to the Spaniard's adopted country that he has called home for the past 15 years. Captain Thunder then is a translation of his childhood to his present life as an artist living in London – an evaluation of his Spanish childhood and history. Likewise it is further evidence of the artist's hand and his seemingly growing desire to reveal himself within his work.

Cano's recent solo shows include 'Masturbation', Allsopp Contemporary, 2006; 'José-María Cano at Jason Rhoades' Black Pussy', L.A, 2006; 'The WS100 visit the Palace of the Marquis de Comillas', Comillas, Spain, 2006; 'The WS100 visit Miro's House and Studio, Mallorca, 2006; 'José-María Cano', The Urban Museum of Shanghai, 2006. José-María Cano lives and works between London and Madrid.