

# Marlborough

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Marlborough Gallery

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## Julio Larraz

February 13 - March 16, 2013

The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce the opening of an exhibition of recent work by the Cuban-born American painter, Julio Larraz, on February 13, 2013. The exhibition will continue through March 16, 2013. This will be Larraz's fourth exhibition in New York since joining the gallery in 2000. The exhibition will feature approximately 24 large paintings on canvas and 4 watercolors and pastels on paper.

Stylistically, Larraz's work may be characterized by simplicity of touch, dramatic lighting, sensuous colors, exaggerated scale, and a combination of reality and fantasy that is generally tropical in atmosphere. His subjects are often metaphors for such things as isolation, melancholy, the absurdity of power, or political intrigue. His paintings frequently incorporate Greek myths and legends, art history dialogues, and contemporary history.

Many of the pieces included in this exhibition embody an overarching characteristic of Larraz's work: he creates a strong narrative element with latent implications that go beyond what is represented on the canvas. The critic Christofer Finch wrote, "a constant in Larraz's art is the always ambiguous interaction between man and nature... Larraz has a virtuoso's ability to conjure up the physical world. Beyond this he takes a poet's delight in evoking imaginary universes, so that every image seems to take on a special significance in the context of the whole, as if it has been plucked from some epic that has yet to be written."

In the exhibited oil on canvas *Contratto nell Campo della Salute (Contract in the Campo della Salute)*, a distinguished-looking, well-dressed man and woman sit comfortably in a gondola in Venice, the bespectacled man carefully studying a large tome while the woman gazes into the distance. Larraz, raising more questions than he answers, leaves the viewer to wonder who the individuals are, what their relationship is, and, as the title suggests, what the agreement is that they are negotiating. Similarly, the painting *A Peaceful Meeting at La Tremebunda* invites speculation as to why a stately woman seated in a small boat is guarded by a man with both an explosive harpoon and a machine gun. While the title implies the imminent encounter with the larger vessel will be peaceful, the name of the ship itself, meaning "violent" or "threatening," as well as the black cat perched at the helm of the small boat would suggest otherwise.

The art historian Edward Sullivan observed that with Larraz, "uncertainty and unease are key to the indistinct details of his subtle dramas." It is possible Larraz's own constant relocation influences his art; after arriving in the United States from Cuba, Larraz has lived in various places including Miami, Washington, DC, New York City, Mexico, Grandview, New York, Paris, and Florence. Larraz stated, "I almost never do paintings that reflect the exact location in which I work, although there is obviously a general suggestion of place." The artist takes dislocation to an extreme with the painting *...Es lux perpetua Luceat Eis*, in which the sharp angles of a gabled house are illuminated against a starry night sky. In place of the moon, however, the viewer is confronted with a planet resembling Earth. While a strong sense of mystery and foreboding permeate this work, Larraz manages to incorporate his sharp sense of humor: the title of the painting derives from a Latin requiem, which was used most famously in Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Born in 1944 in Havana, Cuba, Larraz grew up in a home of cultural and intellectual distinction. His parents ran *La Discusión*, one of the oldest newspapers in Havana. His father had compiled one of the largest private libraries in the country comprising several hundred thousand volumes on painting, history, philosophy, and literature. When the family emigrated to Miami in 1961, this invaluable collection had to remain behind.

Larraz's first exhibition was in 1971 at the Pyramid Gallery in Washington, DC. His first New York exhibition was at the Far Gallery in 1974. In 1975 he was awarded the Cintas Grant by the Instituto de Educación Internacional in New York and in

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## *Julio Larraz* February 13 - March 16, 2013

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1976 the painting prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and National Institute of Arts and Letters in New York. He received in 1977 the Purchase Prize from the Childe Hassam Fund Purchase Exhibition, American Academy of Arts and Letters and National Institute of Arts and Letters. His paintings may be found in public collections and museums in Washington, DC, New York, Florida, Pennsylvania, Colombia, France, and Mexico.

Larraz's most recent exhibitions include *Julio Larraz: Treinta años de trabajo: obra sobre papel*, at the Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá, Bogota, Colombia; which traveled to Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico; Museo de Arte de Zapopan, Guadalajara, Mexico; Museo de Arte Costarricense, San Jose, Costa Rica, 2004; *Julio Larraz*, Le Bellevue, Biarritz, France (in collaboration with Marlborough Gallery), 2008; and *Julio Larraz*, The Victorian Museum, Rome, Italy, 2012.

The artist lives and works in Miami, Florida.

An illustrated catalogue will accompany this exhibition.

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