

**ÁNGELES AGRELA | HÁBITO COSTUME**

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Ángeles Agrela view studio in Granada, 2015. Photo: José Piñar

Before the advent of photography, the portrait was an important document that showed us the costumes, hairstyles and interiors of the moment depicted. Even the how it was painted gave us valuable information about the time. Currently, painting seems to have lost that dimension, though Angeles Agrela strives to use that potential to take us to her realm.

**Hábito Costume** is the third solo exhibition of the artist at Aural. This time brings together a series of portraits, as she calls them, whether or not representations of real people. These works on paper, many of them in large format, arise from a series of drawings that begin to take shape in late 2013 with the generic name Fanzine. Indeed, at first, these sketches and drawings of small format were aimed at publishing in fanzines alone with texts relating to the characters. However, the drawings were taking an independent entity changing the initial idea, focusing on their own interests and formally taking shape.

The title of the exhibition makes an ambiguous reference to some of these items of interest; first the Spanish word habit, which has the double meaning of religious garb or customary habit, repeated regularly, and also change semantically just removing the tilde; and secondly the French term (or English by extension) costume, which sounds to us like “customary uses” but refers to a certain type of formal dress (in English, even the meaning of disguise).

These drawings are not strange to us in the mist of the continuous production of Angeles Agrela because they have much of their previous series. All of them, in one way or another, collect items that were already present throughout her entire career: the body, identity, disguise, masks and desire to show but keep their identity hidden (camouflage), portrait, textures, fabric, and fashion.



Portrait nº 71, 2015. Acrylic and pencil on paper 200 x 150 cm

The choice of each item in these drawings is not accidental. All are carefully chosen for their color and volume, as well as funds that bring a decorative dimension studiously. Also it seems to place special emphasis on the frontality of the figures in the style of a mannequin in a fashion blog, and sometimes the look captures much of the attention. The supposed banality of fashion and gender representation through it is disrupted in these works. Recently we saw in a series of photographs of Frida Kahlo's clothing appearing as a time capsule, carefully kept in a cupboard in his house. For Kahlo, her dress, carefully decorated as her own skin, was anything but a banal thing. Angeles Agrela shows characters that seem to have carefully decided the details of her person, making their extensions, their clothing or their impossible hair, in a non-expendable part of themselves.

In the words of the artist herself: "As usual in my work, this series of drawings not starting from scratch is like a natural continuation of previous series recently produced a series of paintings, mainly oil, directly based on masterpieces.. more classical painting, but in this show there are very clearly close to pop culture, with fashion magazines references, comics, illustration or fanzines. That is why I am working with mixed media (acrylic, pencil) on paper, sometimes large formats. I am very interested in the truth inside a portrait and the artistic game that simulates the image of a person on a flat surface, a game that has always been present in painting over the centuries. In this last series hair takes much importance, which has particular historical and cultural connotations. I use this symbolic and communicative looks, like the hair styles, to create masses replacing the face or to hide it as if it were a mask. I have also always been fascinated by the fashion world, by its chameleonic potential. Clothing allows people to change identity thousand times. I have used this coding, produced by the clothes by the hair, to create a series of ambiguous pictures, I hope, where sex or the attitude of the person represented is not always clear, although hair extensions or clothing apparently have been chosen with a definite intention. It is a job where the humor and irony also play a more related to the mass culture rather than *Haute Couture*.

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Read more: <https://angelesagrela.wordpress.com/>

## BIOGRAFÍA

*It could be defined as a multidisciplinary artist who works with fabric, video, photography, painting and drawing and whose creative process is a storyline, that is, that a group of works gives way to others as part of a same story. My work has always been closely related to the body and usually work with references to art itself, or by the fact of being an artist, or what kind of artist.*

Ángeles Agrela

**Ángeles Agrela** (Ubeda, Jaen, 1966) currently lives and works in Granada. But has lived in Naples (1991 Erasmus Scholarship), Havana (1998, Manuel Rivera Scholarship) and Berlin (2007, Estancia Glogauer Center).

Agrela is a multidisciplinary artist has been working for simultaneously video, photography, painting and drawing. Her work usually follow a storyline giving way to some other works as integral parts of the same story. Since 1994 she has held more than thirty-five solo exhibitions in private galleries between Spain and the Netherlands; as well as public institutions from Italy, France, Germany and Spain. He has also participated in group exhibitions in Switzerland, Mexico, Brazil, Berlin, Miami or New York.

Among the solo shows we can highlight *La profundidad de la piel* (The skin depth) at the Hospital Real of Granada (2012), in the gallery Magda Bellotti de Madrid (2010), *La Matanza de los Inocentes* (The Massacre of the Innocents) in Aural Galería (2011); *Lección de Anatomía* (Anatomy Lesson) at the Hospital of the Centro de Arte Hospital del Rey in Melilla Art (2010), at gallery Manuel Ojeda of Las Palmas (2008); Slangenmens Art Gallery De Glorie of Oostterbeek, Netherlands (2010); *Superculto* (Super Worship) in the Museo Barjola in Gijon (2008); *La Elegida* (Chosen) in Galerie d'Art des Lycées of the Borde Basse in Castres, France (2007), at the Museum of Huelva, Huelva Provincial Council and the Chamber of the Rivadavia government of Cadiz (2006), in Vigo gallery AdHoc (2004); *Contorsionista* (Contortionist) T20 gallery in Murcia (2007); *El puente de la visión* (Bridge view) at the Museo de Bellas Artes of Santander / Caja Cantabria (2007); *Héroes* (Heroes) in the Magda Bellotti gallery in Madrid (2005); *Poder* (Power) in the Aural gallery in Alicante (2005); *Gloria* (Glory) Sandunga gallery in Granada (2004); *Acciones* (Actions) in the Palacio de los Condes de Gabia- Centro José Guerrero of Granada (2003); *Salto al vacío* (Leap) Emerging Zone of the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo of Seville (2001).

Among his group exhibitions include the Andalusian sample video, *Supervisiones II* in Sala de Santa Inés of Sevilla (2011); *Paralelo 40/41* at the Real Academia de España in Rome, Italy (2011); *VideoStorias* in the Museo Artium of Vitoria (2011); *I Festival Beldur Barik* of Bilbao (2010); *The Prague Contemporary Art Festival* in Prague, Czech Republic (2010); Martinez Guerricabeitia 10th Biennial at the Museo de la Ciudad of Alicante; *Camuflaje* (Camouflage) at the Casa Encendida, Madrid (2009); *Paixón privadas, visións públicas* Museo MARCO of Vigo (2008); *No más héroes* in the Museo Artium of Vitoria (2008); *Los indisciplinados* (Undisciplined) at MARCO Vigo (2006); Passion, Design Spanish in the Academie der Künste in Berlin (2006); *El Viaje* (The trip) in the Centro Cultural Español de Cooperación Iberoamericana in Miami, USA, in Larama Contemporary Art Gallery in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (2001).

In 2010 she received the IX Prize of Visual Arts of the Government of Cantabria. In 2013 she was awarded the Audience Award of the Visual Arts Canal Sur. She was recently awarded **the First National Prize BMW of Painting, 2015**.

Among the fairs in which she has participated include ARCO, Artissima, International Art Fair of Caracas, LOOP, Valencia Art, DIVA Digital & Video Art Fair, DFOTO, Arte Santander, MACO, Balelatina Hot Art, New Art.

Her work is present in collections such as the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo (Seville), Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Unión Fenosa (A Coruña), L'Oreal Collection España, Collection Caja San Fernando (Sevilla), Fundación El Monte (Sevilla) Collection Cajastur (Gijon), Caja Vital Kutxa (Vitoria), Gobierno de Cantabria, Collection of Contemporary Art at the UNED, Provincial Visual Arts Foundation Rafael Botí (Cordoba) and in the collections of the Provincial Councils of Granada, Jaén, Cádiz, Málaga and Huelva.