

BASED ON AN IDEA BY COLECCIÓN SUÑOL SOLER

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Warhol- Vijande:

MORE THAN GUNS,
KNIVES, AND CROSSES

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A DOCUMENTARY FILM DIRECTED BY SEBASTIÁN GALÁN AND PRODUCED BY ARTWORKS NO PANIC WE ARE HERE
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Warhol-Vijande: More than Guns, Knives, and Crosses

Vijande, an exquisite, brilliant, and contradictory gentleman, had the remarkable audacity to put Madrid's art scene on the cultural map of 1980s New York. At the same time, he had the foresight to understand that, after all, both cities and their artistic circles were not so different.

The documentary ***Warhol-Vijande: More than Guns, Knives, and Crosses*** tells his story through the voices of those who knew him—artists who worked with him and friends who, from Alaska to Miquel Navarro, from Bob Colacello

to Christopher Makos, from Fabio McNamara to Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada, still mourn his premature passing.

To bring this story to life, Sebastián Galán, the documentary's director, takes his team on a vital journey from New York to Madrid and from Pittsburgh to Barcelona, exploring all facets of Fernando Vijande—how his intriguing relationship with Andy Warhol took shape and the crucial role both played in shaping Spain's cultural scene in the early 1980s.



Fernando Vijande and Andy Warhol, 1983



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Vijande, a Spaniard in the epicenter of New York art

In 1983, a Spanish gallery owner, Fernando Vijande, achieved the greatest artistic feat of his time: he brought Andy Warhol to Madrid with a unique exhibition for which the artist created more than thirty works that represented what he found most interesting in Spain: guns, knives and crosses. The exhibition broke all records of the time. More than 12,000 people came to the Galería Fernando Vijande, located in an underground garage in the heart of the Salamanca district, to see the paintings of the most famous international artist of his time. It was not, by any means, his only feat. Just a couple of years earlier, Fernando



Fernando Vijande, portrait, 1982, Andy Warhol, Acrylic and canvas screen print

Vijande had achieved something unthinkable: the Guggenheim Museum in New York organized *New Images from Spain*, the first retrospective of living contemporary Spanish artists to be held in decades.

His death in 1986, at the age of 55, not only cut short his meteoric career as a gallery owner, but also cut short the bridge between Madrid and New York that he had built with his network of artistic relationships, high society friends and acquaintances from the city's most underground world. "*Fernando had that slightly rogue thing that was adored in New York high society.*", explains Armando Montesinos, director of the Galería Fernando Vijande.

The figure of Fernando Vijande is essential to understanding the developments of Spanish art in the late seventies and early eighties, mixing the Movida madrileña without forgetting the flashes of genius from other corners of the country.

The documentary ***Warhol-Vijande: More than Guns, Knives and Crosses*** recovers their history, blurred by the passage of time.

The Origin of the Documentary

The Suñol Soler Collection owes much of its selection of contemporary art, one of the most outstanding in Spain, to the joint work of Fernando Vijande (1931-1986) and Josep Suñol I Soler (1927-2016).

The gallery owner was an essential part of Suñol's ability to put together an impeccable and impressive collection of works in the 1970s and 1980s, which is now on display at his Barcelona headquarters. Of course, Andy Warhol plays a special role in it. Vijande's career would not be understood without the presence of Josep Suñol in his life, and the Fernando Vijande, portrait, 1982, Andy Warhol

Serigraph and acrylic on canvas collection itself would not have the same meaning without the figure of the gallery owner. But the importance of Fernando Vijande, who became one of the most prominent art dealers in Spain, is being forgotten over the years. The Suñol Soler Collection wanted to pay tribute to a figure whose story could not be lost, with the production of this documentary that recovers his essence, portrays his complex personality and traces the map of a vital adventure that explains some of the most important keys to Spanish art in the 20th century.

Warhol in Spain, the Untold Story

The team behind the documentary **Warhol-Vijande: More than Guns, Knives and Crosses**, led by Sebastián Galán and Susana Banderas, has traveled to New York with another icon of Spanish culture, **Alaska**. With their collaboration, they have interviewed the only three living people who know how Andy Warhol's legendary trip to Madrid came about: **Bob Colacello**, director of Interview and personal friend of Warhol; **Christopher Makos**, his personal photographer; and **Vincent Freemont**, director of *The Factory*. But Vijande's path has also taken them to Pittsburgh, where **Patrick Moore**, director of the *Andy Warhol Museum*, provides the keys to a social and cultural context that explains many aspects of the exhibition that took place in Madrid in 1983. For the first time, we see the elements that formed part of the creative process of those works that went to Spain: worldly inspirations of an artist who elevated the spirit of the vulgar and the everyday to the category of art, and that have remained hidden in time capsules, those boxes in which Warhol kept everything that had to do with a specific moment in his life.

We see the plastic crosses that he bought to photograph as a starting point; the knives lent to him by his friend Chris Stein, a member of the musical group Blondie; and the hundreds of Polaroids that he took before turning the images into paintings. *"The early 1980s were critical for Andy."*, explains Patrick Moore, director of the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh. *"In the American art circuit, he was considered finished. He had to reinvent himself."*

The exhibit in Madrid gave him the opportunity to deal with new themes such as violence or the Catholic faith. But, above all, he discovered a city in which freedom had become the driving force of change, just as it had been in New York in the 1960s, when his Factory was the center of the creative universe.

"Vijande quickly understood that New York and Madrid were two cities with much more in common than most people could appreciate and that they were connected both socially and artistically, but in different decades.", explains Sebastián Galán, director of the documentary.



Alaska and Matt Gray at the *Time Capsule Room*, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, 2023



Press conference for the inauguration of the exhibition *Guns, Knives, Crosses*, Fernando Vijande Gallery, Andy Warhol accompanied by his friend and collaborator, photographer Christopher Makos, Madrid, 1983

The unmissable Madrid exhibition

Warhol-Vijande: More than Guns, Knives and Crosses also portrays the sociocultural impact that Andy Warhol's exhibition and visit to Madrid had not only in the art world, but also in Spanish society in the 1980s. "*Andy's visit was a sociological phenomenon in Spain, which was taking its first steps in the Movida madrileña.*", according to Armando Montesinos, who was director of the Vijande Gallery from 1981 until its closure.

The exhibition ***Guns, Knives, Crosses*** landed in that garage at number 65 on Núñez de Balboa Street, in January 1983. At the crowded press conference, trivia questions were asked that bordered on the ridiculous, and Warhol answered without flinching. At the opening of the exhibition, socialites such as Isabel Preysler, Ana Obregón and Pitita Ridruejo were also present; politicians like Javier Solana; people from the world of cinema like Pedro Almodóvar or Eusebio Poncela; and modern girls like Alaska, Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada or Teresa Nieto.



Exhibition *Guns, Knives, Crosses*, Fernando Vijande Gallery, Madrid, 1983

During the nine days that Andy Warhol spent in Madrid and its surroundings, everyone took a photo with him; everyone got an autograph from the artist, and everyone who came there was able to see him up close, talk to him if their level of English allowed it and touch the artist. He was seen working on a commissioned portrait that he carried out in the gallery itself, converted into a Spanish-style Factory. And the creator of this cultural disruption that would change the destiny of art in Spain forever was Fernando Vijande.

Tributes to Fernando Vijande

"I succeed when my artists succeed."

Fernando Vijande,
gallery owner and cultural disruptor

"My father was a man of refined and eclectic tastes. What changed the modernity of Madrid forever is that he brought Andy Warhol."

Rodrigo Navia-Osorio Vijande,
son of Fernando Viande, and director
of the Fundació Suñol and the
Fundació Glòria Soler

"He was not a typical gallery owner, he did not buy the works to profit: he was a patron."

Miquel Navarro, artist

"Fernando was a gentleman and a pioneer of art in Spain."

Bob Colacello, director of Interview
and collaborator of Andy Warhol

"It all started with Fernando and it all ends with him. Art connects people and he connected us all."

Christopher Makos,
Andy Warhol's personal photographer

"We went to the Warhol exhibition as if Jesus Christ had come to Madrid."

Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada, designer

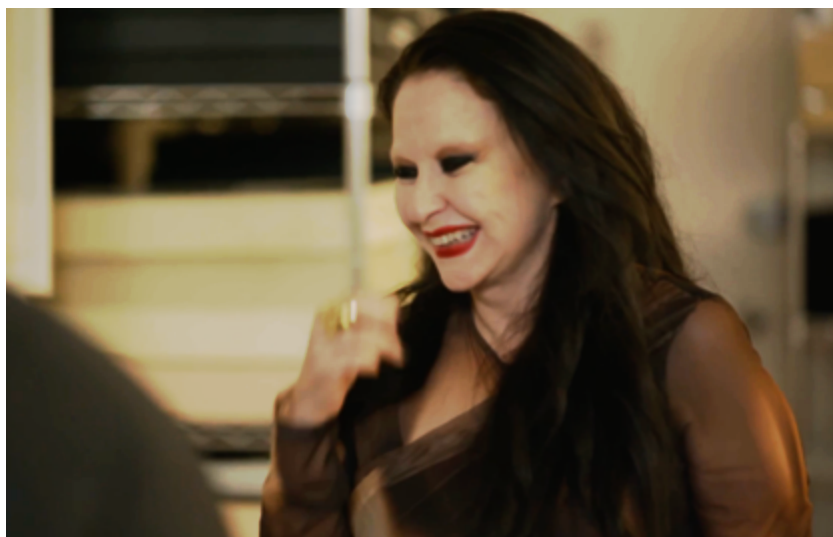
"Fernando had many lives."

Fabio McNamara, multidisciplinary artist

"What you call the Movida and that doesn't start in the 80s, that starts in the 70s, if we want to put a death date, let's put it in 86; with the death of Fernando an era dies."

Alaska, singer, author,
multidisciplinary artist, composer,
collector and entrepreneur

Alaska, The Andy Warhol Museum,
Pittsburgh, 2023



Colección Suñol Soler, More than a Collection

One of the most important private collections in Spain, created by José Suñol Soler (Barcelona, 1927-2019), businessman, philanthropist, collector and patron of Fernando Vijande's gallery career. Its collection, with more than 1,000 works, allows for a broad vision of the avant-garde creation of the 20th and 21st centuries with iconic international artists such as Warhol, Picasso, Dalí, Avedon, Mapplethorpe, etc., and national artists: Zush/Evru, Gordillo, Tàpies, Villalba, Muntadas, Sicilia...

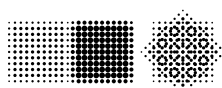
A collection to be shared and at the service of society, through the Fundació Suñol and the Fundació Glòria Soler.

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