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## Skin Bone Quinacridone Adrenochrome: Christian Rex Van Minnen's Spanish Solo Debut

Galería Javier López & Fer Francés // May 12, 2021 - July 31, 2021

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**"(This show) is definitely a full documentation of my covid time." We've heard a similar statement over and over again in the** past months and have seen so many artists tackling our shared experiences and emotions in a variety of ways. But we can't think of anyone else that grabbed this tragic opportunity with as much dedication and vigor as [Christian Rex van Minnen](#). His first solo exhibition in Spain, *Skin Bone Quinacridone Adrenochrome*, which opens May 12th at [Galería Javier López & Fer Francés in Madrid](#), brings together a wide selection of recent works, some fifteen oil paintings, and nine monotypes, working around the schizophrenic atmosphere of our present-day reality.



"At moments all this energy has felt like some great catalyst for change, societally and personally," Van Minnen told Juxtapoz, explaining the background of the pictorial and technical intensity and virtuosity in this body of work. Such perceived drive pushed the artist who opposed the idea to "execute a painting" (his Instagram comment tattoo portraits probably being the culmination of such attitude), to delve into the most preplanned and organized concepts and compositions he has ever worked with. Using nude yoga photos as a reference, the works depicting a levitating figure transformed the human into a still life element assembled alongside objects, other living beings, and an assortment of bat-shit crazy forms (*Skin Bone Quinacridone Adrenochrome*, *Shepherd*, both 2021). With each of them conveying or evoking a certain emotion or response, they all earned a particular role and position in the artist's quest to create "a believable ecosystem of the picture plane."

And all this is just a brief description of what is happening on the surface, the sensory level of the works. Cause the charismatic title of the show, *Skin Bone Quinacridone Adrenochrome* (Quinacridone being an organic compound used as a pigment, and Adrenochrome being a chemical compound produced by the oxidation of adrenaline), suggest a whole other metaphysical realm of these works and Van Minnen's practice as a whole. For him, the painting has bones, skin, and spirit. The skeleton would be the layer of grisaille, serving as the basis for the composition, the glazes act as skin, and quinacridone is an example of a synthetic, artificial, chemical, acidic, fluorescent, digital, and ultra-modern pigment. The balancing and interaction of these elements enable the construction of such separate, distinct, and contradictory narratives, most distinctively represented in figures entirely made of epicuticular wax (*Thin Skin Saviour*, *Thin Skin St Sebastien*, both 2021). Finally, this polarizing premise, just as experiences with psychedelia, conspiracy theories, or the occult, triggers the oxidation of adrenaline and the hyper-vigilant and dynamically confused state similar to the one we've been finding ourselves in. And by MacGyvering his way to "hold on such precariousness, fear, anxiety, and desperation and not freak the fuck out," Van Minnen allegorized these conditions into bewildering scenes imbued with a potent, chaotic state of borderline catatonia. —Sasha Bogojev