

Portraits from the Underbelly: Beautiful Photographs of Spanish Gypsies that Look Like Old Masters Paintings

By Becky Pemberton for MailOnline, March 13, 2015



Elena y Aquiles I, 2013

French-born, Madrid-based photographer Pierre Gonnord (born 1963) has spent a lot of time among the gypsy communities of Spain, particularly in Seville and Perpignan

- Photographer Pierre Gonnord focus on capturing sectors that are forgotten or under-represented in society
- Coal miners, punks, gypsies and immigrants are immortalised in his harrowing portraits
- The exhibition, *The Dream Goes Over the Time*, is running at Hasted Kraeutler in New York until April 25

Eyes fixed strongly on the photographer, light powerfully capturing their natural poses and attire, Pierre Gonnord's subjects are the forgotten groups of society who exist on the 'underbelly' of globalisation.

From coal miners and punks, to gypsies and immigrants, French-born, Madrid-based, Gonnord gives a face to insular communities, tribes and clans that might otherwise risk invisibility from the cyber-pages of history. In a technology-saturated era, which places an emphasis on self promotion and social media, his New York exhibition at Hasted Kraeutler, immortalises collective groups, whilst capturing the individual, in a series of hauntingly beautiful photographs.

The Dream Goes Over the Time is the product of Gonnord's ten year

documentarian of groups which live almost entirely off the grid.

His job has developed into more of a lifestyle, investing time and energy establishing relationships with the communities.

Gonnord said: 'People from the ghettos, the outskirts of the city, that flee from a globalized world from which they feel rejected...set out with nothing more than what they have on their back and a dog as their own only travel companion, embarking on a Grand Tour as nomads, with no return ticket, turning their backs on a (certain) world that no longer interests them.'

The protagonists are captured in the style of Old Master paintings, with simple, dark sets focusing entirely on the subjects from the waist up.

Old Masters were highly recognised and renown artists who would portrait their subjects, among other work, before the 1800s.

Framed as almost royal subjects, the photographs shown an intense strength and resilience, with direct eye contact to the camera and in natural poses.

Featured are an elderly lady wrapped in a shawl, a mother cradling her baby, and a boy leaning on a sack.

Even sleek equines are represented, signifying dwindling biodiversity in our contemporary world.

The photos are not romanticised or glamorised, but instead seek to portray the raw reality of their characters.

Gonnord's work creatively focuses on the individual, whilst representing the collective, resulting in a powerful exhibition of both individual portraiture and cultural documentation.

The Dream Over The Time is running until April 25, 2015 at contemporary art gallery, Hasted Kraeutler, is located in Chelsea, New York City.



Maximiliana, 2014

Coal miners, punks, gypsies and immigrants are immortalised in his harrowing portraits, which seek to establish the social groups firmly in our cyber-history