

Serrano boogie

(Luis López Navarro)

2020

In 2009, Mayor Ruiz Gallardón, in his quest to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of Spain's golden mile, broke into the emblematic Serrano Street with all his machinery. From one day to the next, the exclusive promenade that housed Gucci, Prada and Versace became an accumulation of inconveniences: excavators, dust, noise, sweat and workers of any nationality roaming freely, as if it were the living room of their home.

The works brought out the guts of the neighborhood and the people from the capital city were forced to dance an impossible boogie so as not to trip over the pipes, rush into the ditches and stain themselves with the dirty reality. With the set dynamited, it became clear that what seemed like a solid social universe was actually a trompe l'oeil, a precarious staging. In the light of the naked stage, the pedestrians identified each other as actors in a play, each characterized in the role that he had played. When their gazes met, they knew they were all lying.

Then everything was covered again, the poor returned to his portal, the rich to his rosebush and the priest to his mass. The rubble was collected, the municipal sweepers returned to sweep submissively and in an orderly manner and things returned to their place. The water flowed obediently from the taps, the light bulbs illuminated the cozy Christmas windows, the optical fiber transmitted the stock prices to the offices on time. No one else remembered the time when the violent vulgarity of those cables and sinks surfaced, from that purgatory of mud and formwork that sustained the country. Under Serrano Street there was only the subway, abstract and functional, and below hell, in its place.