

Frieze

A Guide to the Best Shows to See During ARCOmadrid

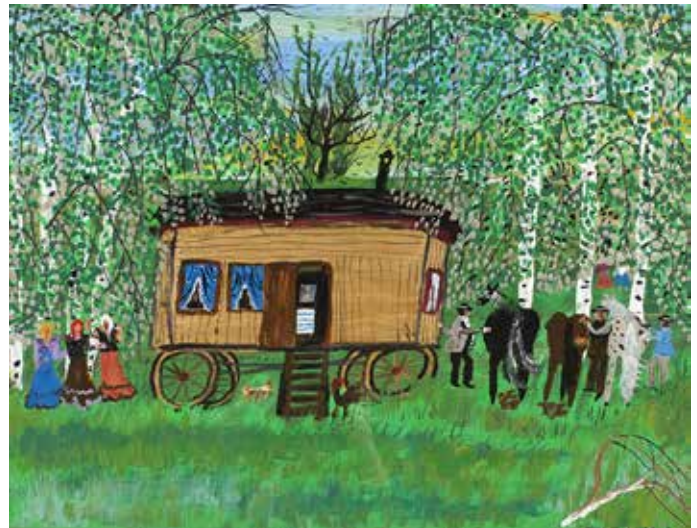
Ahead of the fair this week, contributing editor Max Andrews picks the exhibitions to see in the Spanish capital.

By Max Andrews.

Ceija Stojka, 'This has happened'
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía
22 November 2019 - 23 March 2020

Before becoming known as a writer and painter in the 1980s, Ceija Stojka had already lived through many lives and identities: child of the itinerant Romani community in 1930s Austria, Auschwitz inmate Z6399, holocaust survivor, Viennese rug trader, mother, oral historian.

'This Has Happened' at the Museo Reina Sofía brings together more than 100 of her striking autobiographical paintings. Works such as *Landleben* (Rural Life, 1993) glimpse verdant memories of her idyllic early childhood. The following portrayals of arrests and inhuman imprisonment are depicted with a stark intensity and portentously symbolic brushstrokes: black crows, barbed wire, jackboot laces, or watchtower joists.



Ceija Stojka, *Landleben (rural life)*, 1993, 50 × 65 cm. Courtesy: the artist and collection of Patricia and Marcus Meier, Vienna.

This exhibition-as-testimony by Stojka, who died in 2013, presents the indelible recollection of a life that was so brutally torn apart.

Max Andrews is a writer, curator and co-founder of Latitudes, Barcelona, Spain. He is a contributing editor of Frieze.

Frieze - 24 février 2020
Critic's Guide

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