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## Miguel Conde at Sorokko Gallery

By **Carolyn Zinko**

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Mexican American figurative artist Miguel Conde, who has lived for decades in Spain, appeared at the opening of his first U.S. show, a retrospective, at the Serge Sorokko Gallery, running from Sept. 19–Oct. 19, 2013. A private tour was held Sept. 17, 2013. From left to right, Mexican Museum Director David de la Torre, Serge Sorokko, and artist Miguel Conde.

Drew Altizer Photography

With his silvery beard and creative flair, Mexican American artist Miguel Conde is a Hemingway-esque figure in his adopted Madrid, so famous he can walk in on a busy night and get a table at Botin, the world's oldest restaurant, without a reservation.

The figurative painter, draughtsman and printmaker, whose works hang in museums around the globe, is less recognized in the United States, but a crowd of 200 – including Juan Pablo Suarez, the great-great-grandson of Mexican President Porfirio Diaz – gathered recently for the opening of his first American show, a retrospective

(through Oct. 19) at the Serge Sorokko Gallery. At a private tour on Sept. 17, Mexican Museum Director David de la Torre, museum trustee Emily Pimentel and Univision TV's Fabiola Kramsky and others viewed Conde's work – not quite surreal, not quite Cubist, yet expressive of the human condition – and heard Robert Flynn Johnson, curator emeritus of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, describe Conde's importance. Some figures resembled medieval tarot cards, with overly long, snakelike arms and a sinister air. "I deal with situations that can be rooted in psychology – more cerebral, edgy," Conde said. "I like something more mysterious."

That resonated with Conde collector Peter Michelson, a Stanford physics professor, who saw a parallel in his bid to understand the evolution of the universe: "There is truth out there – laws of nature that haven't been discovered yet. Part of that process is creative; elements of that activity inspire artists."

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