

Kley, Elisabeth. "Fernando Bryce"
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Fernando Bryce, *El Mundo en Llamas* (detail), 2010–11, ink on paper, dimensions variable. Alexander and Bonin.

Fernando Bryce

Alexander and Bonin

Two graphically mesmerizing black-and-white installations filled this gallery space. The compelling show of work by the Berlin-based Peruvian artist Fernando Bryce consisted of 109 ink-drawn renditions of the front pages of European, American, and Peruvian newspapers printed over the course of World War II.

The show, titled “El Mundo en Llamas” (The World in Flames), curated by the Americas Society’s director of visual arts, Gabriela Rangel, included the artist’s meticulous pen-and-ink renditions *El Mundo en Llamas* (2010–11), depicting headlines from Peru’s *El Mundo*, dating from September 2, 1939, when Germany attacked Poland, through November 2, 1945, the day of the atomic-bomb attack on Hiroshima and an anti-Jewish riot in Cairo. Drawings of Peruvian versions of advertisements for such Hollywood films as *Superman* and *Frankenstein* were also included, highlighting the fictional undertones of ostensibly objective reporting. Bryce turns the faded words and pictures he discovers in library archives into crisply painted shapes. In this way, he has explained, “the images are freed from materiality and heaviness.”

Das Reich / Der Aufbau (2010–11), a group of 14 drawings shown in the back space, provides a more succinct example of the conceptual underpinnings of Bryce’s imagery. Seven drawings repro-

ducing some of the 1944 front pages of the German Nazi paper *Das Reich* were hung above seven images of concurrent front pages from *Der Aufbau*, a Jewish German-language journal that was published in New York. *Das Reich* was still publishing headlines like “Full Display of Force,” along with images of

helmeted soldiers and bombs, as Germany lost the war. The last issue depicted of *Der Aufbau*, in contrast, printed on Friday the 13th, 1944, includes a map illustrating Germany’s division into areas controlled by the United States, Britain, and Russia. Bryce thus provided a fascinating exposition of propaganda’s constant flux.

—Elisabeth Kley