

REVERBERATIONS

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All men by nature desire to know. Sign of it is the love of sensations. These, in fact, are loved for themselves, even regardless their usefulness, and above all others, the visual sensations. And it is that not only in order to action, but when we are not going to act, we prefer the vision to all—let us say—others. The reason is that this is, of the sensations, the one that makes us know and shows multiple differences.

ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, Book First

In order to write these lines about Roberto Rébora's most recent work, I'm consulting the book* that was published *à propos* his previous exhibition, *Media Star*, which gathers an outstanding series of critical texts written throughout the years about this painter's work. First of all, I discover pictures that perhaps I had seen two years ago in person but now, with the distance that time lavishes, I rediscover on printed paper. I observe that Roberto Rébora's has been a constant search; in the case of the series which marks a turning point in his work as a whole, *Media Star*, that pursuit has been resolved in a break from his previous figurations; fugue of figuration to return to painting's primary elements: the colour, the line, but mostly the light... Light which emanates from the pictures' architecture providing them with a particular meaning.

In its most radical pictures, *Media Star* displaces the figure from the plastic movement's field of action. The figure acquires a signifying function which reaches beyond the last glares, or the

* *Materia y discurso de fe / Matter and Discourse of Faith*, Mexico, Turner-Páramo, 2016. (In reality, a retrospective vision of Rébora's painting up till then.)

spatial configurations, pursued by that series. Rébora abides in these pictures to three main elements: the line, the colour and the light to give as a result a negation of his previous plastic solutions: the no-shape. The no-shape would be, in any case, a designation for the senses and, ultimately, an habitation for the spirit. That phenomenon, that of immanence, can be appreciated for example in the picture titled *Virtual* (2013), where the programmed interaction of the line, the colour and the light results in a three-dimensional space, in whose center a spiral of light bursts that questions the rationality of the picture as a whole. Meditation on space but, at the same time, meditation on everything which space is not.

Emisor (Sender, 2014), a large format canvas of 250 × 185 cm, doesn't tell any story. In *Emisor*, a beam of light, built on a basis of yellow, red, and orange brushstrokes distributed horizontally along that section of the canvas, is projected on the right side of the picture generating a glow. That glow blinds and brings to mind the sun that falls flat on the deserts calling into question the certainties of sight in the brain's registers. Once we've overcome that first warning, we realize that the picture as a whole starts from a vanishing point located in the canvas' centre-origin. Framing that centre of irradiation is a rectangle of colour predominantly red. The brushstrokes, following a horizon, all depart from there and spread out generating that illusion of a macrocosmos which simultaneously envelopes and blinds the gaze. Rébora has decomposed the illusion of the spatial beginning with three primary elements and has given us in return a reflection, which could be summed up as follows: what we see is not what we see, and what we feel is something beyond the picture; an introspective beyond: the picture opens inwards.

The construction of emotions through controlled horizontal brushstrokes—warm colours, mostly yellow, which contrast with cool colours: blue and green—inevitably refer to Van Gogh and his pictures of the French Midi. The break with the linearity—understood as Programmed Reason or Logos—takes place by virtue of the irruption of the spiral or the circle, which introduces the sensation of vertigo as the predominant element in that series of introspective passages. The pictures, as I previously said, open inwards, but at the same time do so showing what is outside.

The main room in this exhibition is conformed of pictures from a new series, which Rébora has named *Flujo Mundo* (*World Flux*), two nouns which would seem opposed despite their evident tautology. The world is what flows, the world is what changes;

however, it remains static, in its unceasing turns, before our astonished gaze. Rébora, in these pictures, follows on the wake of *Media Star*, but he has made flexible the composition lines of his most rigorous constructions. The figures have reappeared as anomalies, or evident distortions of a programme which had as its purpose the revelation of the instant. The gesture returns with the figure, and what was once precise architectural constructions now becomes a bestiary's chromatic solitudes in whose center gravitates again a worry for what's the human. Botches of colour and anarchy, with appearances faces that we can't identify because they are so blurred or insinuated as is literally happens with dreams when they're remembered. Somatizations in red, orange or cyan, where a cast brought from Toulouse-Lautrec's brothels and Daumier's nightmarish fancies beset us with an arsenal of questions.

In *Taurus*, Sokurov film about Lenin's last days, there is a dialogue between a Lenin on the verge of insanity and his doctor. Lenin declares he feels about to die, and his doctor responds that there is no metaphysical proof of the existence of death. Following this reasoning, we could add that there is no metaphysical proof of the existence of life, as much as there isn't one in regards to the existence of man himself. What are we, then, if we perchance are truly anything at all?

We are anomalies within a constructive process halted or verified within a picture. The picture contains the macrocosmos and, more than an aspiration, it's a boundary, a possible architecture which, in the moment it's detached from itself and laid bare, shows what it is.

(Translated by Adriana Díaz Enciso)

Roberto Rébora, *Flujo Mundo*, critical essays by Daniel Garza Usabiaga and Gabriel Bernal Granados, trans. Adriana Díaz Enciso, Mexico, Fundación Black Coffee Gallery-Museo Internacional de Arte-Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, 2019. [Brochure, print and digital editions:

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