

RÉBORA, LINE AND CONFLICT

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I. In between the canvas and the net there is a fishermen's myth. Or an arrest warrant. Between fisherman and fish there is almost a relationship of equals in the gaze. And light? Where is the light? There is a zone in Roberto Rébora's painting that might be installed beneath the question Where is the light? The question isn't neither mythical nor religious. It is entirely secular, material, organic. It doesn't point at an absence or at a hidden presence. It rather points at a *where, in what place* in the phenomenon; laid out, how: ahead, behind, on top, below, always complete, "bathing" it all. The *where is it* is not a question regarding a previous state or a lament for having been. It points at a dependence or at the possibility of a new situation of the object in relation to the space where the gaze places it. The figure in some of Rébora's work doesn't make it clear whether if it is coming *out* or *into* space. They are figures with rarefied borders, almost melted into their background. To negotiate that position would be an interval. To say "the figure strives to come out, to be become." As if the process of individuation reached the figure already devoid of any imaginal or representative category. In fact, figuration in Rébora constitutes his *interspace*.

II. In *Virtual* [series *Media Star*], the borders' process of rarefaction promises to interpret a new world. Is an America [the continent] a want or a plus of imagination? Imagination "leads" to the place, imagination overflows: it gives birth to the mixed-up borders, it promises the world. But *Virtual* draws a differential line that is only designated in its sharpness on interpreting on canvas a world that is *on line*. To interpret a world *on line* implies the reinterpretation of the line. *Virtual*, inasmuch as image, threatens an *aligned* world (the *alienation* is evident but it is more than a mere alliterative play:

*alienation is the whole meaning of the picture, and Virtual the pictorial interpretation, reluctant to disappear, of a world clinging to the real that has no more defence than a regression through yearning that only attains a contrast power through "technical impoverishment": little more than a step of the line towards the figure as concreteness) where the proto-figures are an "ad-vent" for the one who looks. That is to say, the diversion is not in the supplanting of the real for the virtual-imaginal. It is in the course's ambiguity, which in the end defines the meaning of the action. If *Virtual* is right, the line will no longer be space's differential axis but just another spatial reference redistributed among proto-figures con-fused with the sentient sphere. Space wouldn't be a place but movement without place, sheer transit of desire blurring any metaphoric pretension of being. We would have to wonder where does the picture, in its interpretation of the new world, places the point that makes it possible without the question leading to the localization of any pretension of "origin". The virtual has no origin or end. Any resonance of a beginning is here dismissed by a space conceived as emanation.*

III. *Space* [series *Media Star*], in its geometric equivalence, does not make allusion either to any origin. What it "declassifies" is the unity of a figure already con-figured that alludes through remittance to the de-realization of proto-figures sketched somewhere else. But unity is not a synonym of escaping classification, a single probable gesture in a sphere of classified totality that results from the space-world's virtuality. *Unity*—what is individual—doesn't mean no possible freedom. On the contrary, the figure-unity is welded to the geometric vertex. The convergence of every line in the figure is threatening, as if the figure's con-figuration, proof of a desired unity—that is to say: the promise of individuation—were located through possible crushing, through a threat of "closure" over the individual, through a "folding". It is a consequence of space conceived as emanation that results in the inversion of unity: the figurative no-movement un-emanates, carries back in an illusory manner to a sense of beginning. Back to the same: *Space* forces those who are looking to remember that in that pictorial space of Rébora's there is no way out or in.

IV. "Adherences" are characteristic of Rébora's pictorial approach, figuration as spatial adherence. The figure in conflict with space shows a displacement. In *Cama* [*Bed; El Medio Inteligente / The Intelligent Medium* series] there is no figure lying down: there is

figure adhered. In this sense, there is the suggestion of a will of unification of the figure with space; what is quite simply a desire of dis-individuation or, in an impossible unfolding of artificial pantheism, of disappearance through fusion. What has virtually stepped back to the linear primitivism of a proto-figure placed one step before its configuration was then already prefigured in a conception of figuration as a difficult sojourn. Not only in Rébora is the place of the object difficult. The place of seeing *from* painting is difficult. That space powerfully anchored in the arts' tradition as a consecrated space in a close dialogue with the representation not only phenomenal but institutional of the world—painting as representation of a worldly power—reveals its being in crisis when it reads from its own space a certain illegibility of the world. What stands out in Rébora is his not renouncing the reality of painting, that material consistence that doesn't hesitate to show its temporal "indigence" in the face of the permanent *imminence* of novelty in which technology has placed the present world, and his having conquered an *interspatial* limit zone, that does not yield or step back before symbolic or meta-pictorial conjugations.

(Translated by Adriana Díaz Enciso)

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