

Vicente Blanco

"Estructuras para pertenecer (Structures to Belong)" 30.03 - 18.05.2019

Susana González

"Estructuras para pertenecer (Structures to belong)" (2018), presents the last work of Vicente Blanco in which the interest in the processes of identity construction, already seen in previous projects, remains. Although it can seem distant from other works of the artist, in which to produce images he used mainly video and animation, this proposal surprises for the ability of Blanco to articulate the theme and to formalize it in a multidisciplinary creative approach. In this case through low-reliefs made of paper, concrete and ceramic pieces, and a serie of diagrams with geometric shapes.

The project shows an alternative iconography through an imaginary of a rural nature identity, sometimes disappeared or in ways of extinction, and that moving between what's real, what's fictional, and what's imagined, expresses his intention to give value again to the local and its memory. Vicente Blanco looks back at the surroundings where he lives and interested in aspects related to his traditions, his customs, his language and the modes of behaviour of his people, he recovers different elements associated with it: architectures, tasks of women and men of the countryside, natural or vegetable elements.

It is a fact that as a consequence of the prevailing neoliberal models, traditional rural life is experiencing a loss of its essence and culture, of all the cohesive components that unifies it and makes it unique. In this way, generating a dialectic between past and present, between arts and art crafts, between reality and fiction, Blanco makes reference to a context, to rethink it and to approach its reality, often replaced by a hyperreality, associated with the concept of simulation[1] by Baudrillard, in which representation prevails over what is represented through a construction remade, recreated and therefore adulterated.

The formalization is produced through fragmented narrative elements with the appearance of a monumental frieze. There are some utilitarian hieroglyphs, incised volumes in the concrete in an indecipherable form of writing, perhaps like these, Blanco intends to "save the sacred" through these imaginary signs. But there are several historical references that can be formally mentioned and that can tell concrete historical-social contexts. In this case, its aesthetic points to a certain taste for Art Deco architecture, in the period between wars, a time characterized by the mechanization and to which components of Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism or Rationalism of the Bauhaus are added. There is an interest, just like Blanco, for the sublimation of the geometric (cubes, hexagons, octagons, spheres), for symmetry and for the straight line.

These friezes used to represent labour activities of that time based on the belief in progress and a utopic future. Continuing with the analogy, men are portrayed always looking strong and women participating in the production chain. It is curious to notice that the style was used not only by artists, decorators, artisans or architects, but also shared by Vicente Blanco. Maybe his goal with this work is not to make a piece that will respond to this reality, but somehow will give visibility to a fact, and in this case particularly, not only to the transformation and reconstruction but its destruction and therefore, the disappearance of the symbolic and conceptual elements of it

On the other hand, it gives value to the artisan character in the formal character of the pieces presented. The process becomes reflexive instrumental and puts in evidence an attitude with which claim the manual work. With low-reliefs made through the geometrization of different forms, using three-dimensional polyhedrons of folded paper, in a form of a millenary expression, Blanco's work makes reference to the invention of paper and it gains importance among forms symbolism of work, the ceremonial and the therapeutic. This practice was not only carried out in the East. Characters like Miguel de Unamuno, who some describe as the paradigmatic Origami maker, practised this hobby continuously having even written a treatise about the practice of Folding-paper. The term used Cocotología was doing an allusion to the elaboration of the Origami Cranes. Paradoxically, his descriptions of rural Galicia of that time have little to do with the current picture.

But returning to handcrafted, Richard Sennett[2] highlights the loss that represents the devaluation of certain professions in contemporary society, based on the premise that "to do is to think" and therefore, a significant part on the creation of knowledge. In this way, the author maintains the interrelation between tacit and reflective knowledge led to the fact. The industrialization of tasks and the subjugation of concrete personal experience has not only been denounced only by him, but also John Ruskin advocated for the revitalization of the craft as an artist. First the Arts & Crafts movement and then the Bauhaus, revitalized and valued these methods. Just like Blanco that influences the situation from two perspectives, of revaluation and denounce of its disappearance.

We cannot forget another obvious reference, the representations of the rural space made by the vanguardist Galician artists, that from exile continued making portraits of women and men of the countryside. For example Louis Seoane and his plan schemes in which the figuration would have more abstract characteristics or Maruja Mallo than in the serie The Religion of Work of 1937, he conciliates symbol and nature.

Mainly from a aesthetic perspective, Blanco decodes and fragments his narrative to encourage its revision and even though the relationships may be less immediate a priori, the receiver decodes the message through the sequence of signs and their perception. The interpretation of the piece is completed by the spectator as an active element, result of his aesthetic experience. As noted by John Dewey[3] will be the result of the interaction with the work, where analytical and synthetic elements will activate the cognitive processes. However, the experience will pass from the collective repertory to the memory to configure an individual symbolic unit according to the personal experience of each one, allowing to be as many interpretations as spectators.

To conclude, I highlight in Vicente Blanco's work the sufficiency of hybridization of different resources, modes and significant. The ability to incentivate thinking and to highlight its meanings. His multifaceted aptitude and will to protect allows him to speak about the collective, what is individual and about the contemporary to extol the traditional, the identity, associated with the emotional ties and the sense of permanence.

[1] Baudrillard, Jean. Cultura y simulacro. Editorial Kairos, Barcelona. 1978. [2] Sennett, Richard, El artesano, Ed. Anagrama, Barcelona, 2009.

[3] Dewey, John. El arte como experiencia. Ed. Paidós- Barcelona. 2008

Vicente Blanco

1974, Cee (A Coruña), Spain

Currently based in Lugo

Studies

1997 Degree in Fine Arts, University of Vigo

1998-1999 PhD courses at UPV (Universidad del País Vasco, Bilbao/ Vasquian Country University).

2012 PhD in Fine Arts, University of Granada

Solo exhibitions

2019 Estructuras para pertenecer, Galería silvestre, Madrid

2009 Contrato para paisaje, Galerie van der Mieden, Amwerp

2006 Otra vez algo nuevo, Galería Elba Benítez, Madrid

2004 Alguna vez pasa cuando estais dormidos, Espacio Uno, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, MNCARS, Madrid

2003 Lo que se espera de nosotros. Centro Galego de Arte Contemporáneo, CGAC, Santiago de Compostela

2002 Oh, oh, oh, oh yeah! Marisa Marimón Galery, Ourense

2001 Transeuropa Xpress, Bratislava en dos segundos, Torrente Ballester Center, Ferrol

1998 Luces de artificio, Galería Sargadelos, Santiago de Compostela

Grants and prizes

2015 I Premio Pintura Concello de Cambre, A Coruña

2010 Premio Internacional Bienal de Arte Fundación María José Jove

2008 I Premio Estampa Comunidad de Madrid

2005-2007 Beca Endesa

2003-2005 Beca Unión Fenosa, Kunstfabrik, Berlín, Alemania

2000-2001 Beca de Proyectos Generación 2000, Caja Madrid, Madrid, España

1999-2000 Beca de La Diputación de A Coruña para Ampliación de Estudios Artísticos, CGU, Los Ángeles, California, USA

1996-1997 Beca de Colaboración en el Departamento de Expresión Artística, Universidad de Vigo, España

Collections

CGAC, MUSAC, Caja Madrid, Caja Extremadura Fundación Coca- Cola, Caixa Galicia, Caixa Nova, INJUVE, Patio Herreriano, DA2, Endesa, MACUF, Fundación María José Jove UNED, Comunidad de Madrid Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Deputación de A Coruña DKV

Group shows

2017 Alén dos xéneros, MARCO, Vigo, Santiago de Compostela auditorium. 2016 Breves episodios, Luis Seoane Foundation, A Coruña

2015 Persistencia e Animación, Sociedad Nacional de Belas Artes, Lisboa

En un lugar de la memoria, Círculo de Artes Plásticas de Coimbra, Portugal

2014 Lo real maravilloso, MUSAC, León / MOT, Tokio, Curators: Kristine Guzman/Yuko Hasegawa

2013 CAFÉ: Una historia de la animación española. Cervantes Institute, Tokio, Japan. Curator: Cristina García-Laursén (Open This End).

2012 A obra elixida, MIHL, Lugo

- Itinerant, DKV Collection
- Curator's Network, Matadero, Madrid.
- International Plastic Arts Competition Open Piece, (acquisition), Caja Extremadura
- Colección III, Centro de Arte 2 de Mayo, Madrid
- Región 0. The Latino Video Art Festival. Centro Rey Juan Carlos I, New York, Video Festival of Camaguey, Cuba, Big Screen Project New York
- XII certame de artes plásticas "Isaac Díaz Pardo", Council of A Coruña 89 Km, MARCO, Vigo

2010 89 Km, MARCO, Vigo

- Art Amsterdam, Galerie van der Mieden, Amsterdam Bienal Foundation Maria José Jove, A Coruña · XXV años, Muestra de arte injuve, Antigua Fabrica de Tabacos, Circulo de Bellas Artes, Madrid
- Merrie Melodies (and another 13 ways of understanding drawing) DA2, Salamanca
- XXXI Autumn Show, Itinerant, Extremadura

2009 XV Película de Pel, Galería Marisa Marimón

- Hybrid Generations: Forms and Languages of Video-Art in Spain, CIGE 2009, Stand Casa Asia, Pekin
- Rencontres Internationales, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin / Auditorium Sabatini, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

· Realidades, expresiones, tramas. Arte en Galicia desde 1975, Fundación Caixa Galicia, Pontevedra

· Rexistros Abertos, Museo Provincial, Lugo.

2008 Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin, Centre Pompidou, Beaux Arts, Paris Exposición Becarios Endesa 9, Museo de Teruel

· Parangolé, Museo Patio Herreriano de Valladolid, Valladolid, España

2007 Fantasmagoría Dibujo en Movimiento, Fundación ICO, Madrid Geopolíticas de la animación, CAAC, Sevilla, MARCO, Vigo El Puente de la visión, Museo de Bellas Artes de Santander Aquí y ahora, Sala Alcalá, Madrid

- Destino Santiago, Instituto Cervantes Praga e Instituto Cervantes Berlin.
- Existencias MUSAC - Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, León

2006 ¿Viva pintura!, Hangar 7, Salzburg, Austria

- 16 proyectos de arte español, curated by Maria Corral, ARCO' 06, Madrid
- Urbanitas, MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Vigo, Vigo, Becas Unión Fenosa, MACUF, A Coruña
- Destino Santiago de Compostela, Instituto Cervantes de Sofía, Bulgaria
- Contos dixitais, CGAC, Santiago de Compostela

2003 Monocanal, MNCARS, Itinerante

- Edición Madrid, Palacio de las Tentaciones, Madrid, · Loop, OO. Art, Barcelona

2002 Narrando espacios, tiempos, historias. XXVII Bienal de Pontevedra, Pontevedra · Figuraciones: Arte civil, magicismos, espacios de fronteras. Itinerante

- Exposición Artistas nominados Francia-España, Prix Altadis, Paris

2000 Transfer 2000-2001, CGAC, Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela; Palacio de Revillagigedo, Gijón; Sala Rekalde, Bilbao, España; Städtisches Museum Leverkusen Schlob Morsbroich; Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum Duisburg, Städtisches Museum Abteiberg Mönchengladbach; Gessellschaft für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Essen, Alemania

- Bloody Nose, Main Gallery CGU, Los Angeles, USA
- Waves, Festival de Vídeo de Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA Generación 2000, Caja Madrid. Itinerant

1999 Muestra de Arte Joven, Círculo de Bellas Artes, Madrid, España

1998 Exposición taller de Ángel Bados y Txomin Badiola, Arteleku, San Sebastián; Centro Cultural Montehermoso, Vitoria, Spain