

Activities related to the exhibition

“Collecting and Patronage”. Talk. Participants : Carlos Urroz , José María Lafuente, Tomeu Simonet and Nekane Aramburu. Presented and moderated by Miguel von Hafe. 30th June 2016 at 7 pm. Free activity .

Guided tour for Amics d’Es Baluard to the exhibition “The Agony and the Ecstasy. Latin American art in the collections of Mallorca; a review based on contemporaneity” with Nekane Aramburu and Gerardo Mosquera. 1st July at 7 pm.

Finissage Activity. Visited to the exhibition with Nekane Aramburu. 27th September at 7 pm. Free Activity

Exhibition dates: 02/07/2016-02/10/2016

Museum Opening Hours:
Tuesday to Saturday: 10 - 20 h
Sundays: 10 -15 h
Mondays closed

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English

THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY

Latin American art in the collections of Mallorca; a review based on contemporaneity

This project comes into being as a trial, necessary in the first instance to contribute to a certain possible history of our immediate environment based on a global perspective.

The hegemonic (European and North American) historiographies, demonised for their simplistic visions embedded in a series of topics of spatial references became, obsolete in the contemporary dislocation. The relationship between centre and periphery and the new physical and virtual frontiers led to the settling of any arguments surrounding the reductionist term, “Latin American Art”.

Recognising, therefore, this referential debate space as the basis of the project, the keys that mark the deployment of its arguments are:

- Affirming the impossibility of speaking of Latin American art as such.
- The back-and-forth relationship between Mallorca and Latin American countries.
- Dissidence and complementarity of focusses of the selected artists.
- Functioning of the art ecosystem: public/private collecting/institution.

I. The ethnocentrism of the arts gave rise to a veiling of things territorial, an artificial reductionism in which the geopolitical borders and hegemonic European thought consented to simplification with respect to a common memory, seeking a Manichean, contradictory map.

This idea is reflected in an extraordinarily finely-tuned manner in a baseline artistic exercise. That of Joaquín Torres García with his work America shown in 1943. In this map of South America the Uruguayan creator drew, he placed the south pole at the top and the equator at the bottom, declaring “Our north is the south” and, “We have a true idea of our position, and not as the rest of the world wishes”.

Just as it is a delicate issue to allude to a European art, we cannot speak of a homogenised Latin American art, neither inside nor outside of the region’s countries. The example of the non-gringo Americas in the north or centre of this continent would lead to totally inapprehensible pseudo-categories. Speaking of the contradiction of this artificial brand or seal, “Latin American Art”, linked to artists born in those countries, Gerardo Mosquera, who collaborates on this project, has stressed this. His keynote speeches and essays - now classics - such as Beyond the Fantastic (1995), Latin American Art ceases to be Latin American Art (1996) and Goodbye Identity, Welcome difference (2000), reveal this time and again.

II. The migratory movement from the island to the American continent was intense and fundamentally directed towards countries like Cuba, Puerto Rico, Argentina, Mexico and the United States, lands of opportunity for artisans or small Mallorcan industrial guilds.

The Grand Tours, which were so fashionable from the 17th century one, and the influence of impressionism in Europe, brought about the progressive landing of artists, some of them with scholarships in the great European capitals (Paris and Rome) and curious to discover the island through the influence of artists like Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, who had settled in Polença, or the artistic couple Joan Sureda and Pilar Montaner.

The incidence of tourism based on a legendary moment - that of the construction of the hotel Formentor by Argentinian Adán Dielh, a great friend of Tito Cittadini and Anglada-

Camarasa - transports us to an early period of tourism, between 1920 and 1936. Subsequently, after some difficult years, from 1960 to 1973 demand shot up due to the transfer of the old airport of Son Bonet to Son Sant Joan, and it would be the hotel establishments that would give rise to an economic development based on tourism.

The biennales and big art shows were the best place for interchange and learning, like redoubts towards which works gravitate and where market research is done.

III. The Latin American art boom that took place from the 'nineties, in a similar way to what occurred in literature in the 'sixties and 'seventies with authors like Julio Cortázar, Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa or Carlos Fuentes, evolved riddled with clichés exemplified in categories of surrealism, magical realism or the post-fantastic.

It is possible to speak of certain identity nuances based on the ideological positioning of contexts that have undergone special circumstances and which are differentiating. Nuances with antecedents more political, in the broad sense of the word, than aesthetic. Their tensions force one to think and to do. Thus, for example, shying away from the anthropological, photography passes from social realism to symbolic conceptualism almost naturally. We know that the networks and nodules of the local identities, or those with roots in these countries, appropriate their cultures of origin, differentiating them. The complementarity of opposites as a common link and those anchoring elements intersect images and concepts, making them characteristic.

Particularities are what define each stance, oscillating between militancy and social commitment, ideological concerns and the instrumentation of tactics – in the sense of De Certeau. Moreover, the enlightened training, optimism and a longing for modernity in which the individual is universal is another axis that holds up many of the attitudes of its artists.

In this reference framework, the presumed contradictions inherent in the work produced by creators from these countries become complementary and the dichotomy between form and content acquires sense, in all of its complexity.

Regarding it all, and with numerous examples to corroborate this in Es Baluard's exhibition, I think that, in spite of the Manicheism that differentiates the northern hemisphere, with colder intellectual postures than the southern commitments, the attitude of conceptualisms or conceptualist practices serve to argue in favour of a certain common denominator.

Encouraged by institutional exhibitions, we have seen that beyond the symbolic capital intrinsic to the same and simplistic reductive ideas, the condition of Latin American art begins to design a network of identities united by geo-aesthetical subjectivity. In it, a new way of collecting is developed as a construct of the imaginary, linked to a colonial post-awareness that allows us to develop a global vision of art from the focus of cosmopolitan private initiative. An aesthetical and ethical cosmopolitanism that will make its mark on each of these collections, configured from the second half of the 20th century and on.

Artists from the 'nineties from Mexico and Argentina linked to alternative collectives and subsequently absorbed by the market would be some of the first to draw our attention, and names like Francis Alÿs, Carlos Amorales, Santiago Sierra, Semefo/Teresa Margolles or Rafael Lozano-Hemmer began to stand out in numerous collections. A distancing from the pictorial and sculptural, in the canonical sense, in favour of the conceptual, artistic activism proposals and above all, the small format in drawing and photography would be some of the most-followed trends. The tradition of collecting and patronage is in Es Baluard's DNA and we never cease to insist on the need to establish the right channels of functioning so that the art system and the different agents within it intensify their relationships and develop the necessary routes for its synchronic operation.

The relationship between artists, gallery owners, art shows, biennales, prizes, curators, specialist publications, critics and museums is an ecosystem that institutes the legitimation of the works, but also their preservation and conservation for the future and posterity.

The distribution of the pieces selected in the exhibition room has been established in four symbolic sections, under the names of: Conflict, Ideology, Beauty and Passion, in order to systemise and seek an analysis of personal and collective memories, thus enabling an initial approach that comes close to the complexity of these situations and constructs.

With regard to the evolution of the montage, without forgetting the specificity that defines each placement and by way of a guide, the purpose of the four groups of works the exhibition is comprised of is to propitiate their legibility and contextualisation.

Introduction: Adrián Villar Rojas

Passion: Carlos Amorales, Nicola Constantino, Roberto Jacoby and Alejandro Ros, Jorge Macchi, Ana Mendieta, Rosângela Rennó, Sandra Vásquez de la Horra, Adrián Villar Rojas

Beauty: José Bechara, Tania Bruguera, Daniel Chust Peters, Dr. Lakra, Leandro Erlich, Luis González Palma, Federico Herrero, Guillermo Kuitca, Marcos López, Los Carpinteros, Fabian Marcaccio, Jorge Mayet, Cirenaica Moreira, Vik Muniz, Ernesto Neto, Cecilia Paredes, Wilfredo Prieto, Tunga

Ideology: Francis Alÿs, Alexandre Apóstol, Arthur Barrio, Eduardo Basualdo, José Bedía, Iñaki Bonillas, Aníbal López, Liliana Porter, Miguel Rio Branco, León Ferrari, Marepe, Adrián Melis

Conflict: Allora & Calzadilla, Angela Bonadías, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Regina José Galindo, Carlos Garaicoa, Mario García Torres, Alfredo Jaar, Kcho, Glenda León, Rafael Lozano Hemmer, Teresa Margolles, Priscilla Monge, Óscar Muñoz, Andrés Orjuela Castañeda, Damián Ortega, José Alejandro Restrepo, Doris Salcedo

Nekane Aramburu
Curator

¹Arte en Iberoamérica. 1820-1980. Madrid: Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, p. 285 (catalogue of the exhibition "Arte en Iberoamérica. 1820-1980", Madrid, Palacio de Velázquez, Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 1989).