

## CRYPTOGRAM

*A work of art must have a universal, deep, substantial and diverse meaning, so that every person can extract from it the liqueur of his choice.*

*Like a totem standing on a crossroad, nevermore completely understood.*

*Jean Dubuffet. Manuscripts on Art.*

### **Reflections, fragments and scenes on Mayte Alonso's work**

Recently, Mayte Alonso pinpointed the research into architectural features, that remained in people's minds, as the origins of her work. She referred to particular shapes, stirring up sensations that we can all identify and that we hand down from generation to generation. The end result is a series of art pieces, stills, transparencies and installations, created over the years in the different cities she has lived.

I believe that is interesting to realise that a creative process underlies her work, based on the transformation of a strong initial intuition into an abstract result, highly expressive, by means of complex structures.

### **Reflections – *snoitcelfeR***

"The Man Drawing a Lute" by Albert Durer (1525) shows a perspective machine. The visual ray is the thread joining a virtual eye with the object. The projection is the junction between the visual ray and the area enclosed in the wooden frame. Each point finishes in the paper by opening and closing a window through two threads, one horizontal and one vertical.

Mayte's work could be represented by this painting, because in her complex work, a first inspiration turns into a sculpture and its reflection. Her work is never-ending going and returning from the world of imagination to the world of creativity and then into a projection, just like in the painting.

A closer look reveals nevertheless, a hidden and stronger point of reference, that reinforces what the painting is representing: symmetry. Two windows, light and shade. Two lutes, real and projected. Two sketchers, one in the room and another one over the table entwined like in a loom, are creating a vibrant image, easily printed in our minds.

The dark room, the still, the shadow, the imprint, the projection, the map, the echo, the window, the mirror or the dream are mechanisms acting as hinges, reducing and enlarging the dimensional field of the real object or its memory. They are symmetry machines, creative mechanisms independent from tendencies or time.

The glint or reflection is the end result, going beyond materials or techniques used.

## ***F-r-a-g-m-e-n-t-s***

One can spend hours watching a child draw. The scribble is the result of a child drawing his thoughts, although his hand is not capable enough to give them shape. First lines inspire more and is just fun for a child to see how the pencil behaves, trying to draw straight lines, curves and turns. The amount of shapes to be drawn is limited but, by superposing similar lines he can see images appearing. They grow from archaic and direct lines that we constantly repeat from our origins.

We appreciate on paper, both an immediate and a deferred version of reality. Such fragments turn sometimes into signs and symbols containing a valued heritage, able to build subtle relations through time. It is well documented how the primitive man used signs to merge past, present and future. He painted actual figures, superposing images that represented different stages of memory.

Fragments and entwined reality, arch pieces, domes or vaults in her Archaeologies, or memories in her Encounter Places, are the raw material for Mayte's work.

An art piece or its projection may consist of several fragments which seem to be merging or pulling apart. In her work "Bouillon de Sculpture" these fragments form even part of a kind of sculpture broth in a pot that contains the still of a piece which we will never get to know.

Just as we know of the existence of stars by the light they had once produced, however we will never watch the original star, distance and time prevent us to see them, it does not exist any more.

The physical limits of a particular space are open to alteration, through either projection or arrangement of the architectural fragments, that constitute the origin or the essence of that space. This occurs in the project "Arqueología de las Cosas" for the Reales Atarazanas in Seville or in the case of the intervention projected for a square in Paris.

They are therefore place signs.

## ***Places***

Some sites are unique, acting as nodes or convergence. In the cave, the temple, the shrine or the cities foundation, painting and architecture channel the place energy. They are landmarks, constantly guiding the way back to our roots. "Find again under the stones the secret of our fountains", Adriano remembers through M. Yourcenar.

It is not a coincidence that Mayte's journeys aim is to encounter places capable of waking up her initial intuition, which culminates in an art piece. Real and imaginary landscapes are captured eagerly by means of photographs, reminiscences and feelings.

The brief and irretrievable impression of a morning over Bir-Hakeim Bridge, an unreal baroque staircase, the cosmic attraction of the Maritime Theatre, past and present living in Rome, the Thermal Baths, the Pantheon, the Stars, or the Black Holes are magic places where our senses sharpen.

Paris shows a change, Mayte's look is fixed on the special connection between the most representative city buildings. Now the fragments are perceptions from unbelievable angles, such as Notre Dame seen through IMA's mobile diaphragms, or the Garnier Opera Dome seen through d'Orsay Station clock sphere. The essence of a place is now defined through a network of associated perceptions.

Mayte appears as an explorer artist, reaching manifold and variable territories, full of creases and interlaces. A permanent state of curiosity leads the wish to grow, to go beyond discoveries and known paths. At this stage, new themes and combinations between sculptures and their projections begin to appear.

In her "Scenographies" one of the photographs of the series inspiring each piece of art is projected over the wall and the sculpture interferes with the projection rays, being projected and projector at the same time. The sculpture makes its shadow, being coloured at the same time by the original image. Only the complicity of the observant playing with the shadow of his hand, alter for an instant the balance of time and space reached.

On the other hand in the "portable pieces", the interference of the sculpture with the image is inverted, the object is now divided by a thin watery plane – reflective and translucent at the same time- produced by an image-memory impressed in a methacrylate surface. We can distinguish by a slight movement of the head the thin stainless wire at the front part and behind the still shot, the piece seems to reflect itself. In these two series we can see that the memory of a experience in a place, captured by photography, forms part of the art work.

Sculpture definition and experimental ways known so far, seem to vanish, to reappear stronger and sharper. The result is very heterogeneous when we look at the technical means used, but very accurate and unified when we see the results.

We have had the opportunity of sharing interesting talks in the last few days, in her studio, in the street. Later, when I was trying to find a clue which help me to understand better her creative process, I recalled a child's anecdote described by Mayte that was imprinted in my mind like a sequence shot.

A child walks recklessly along the corridor at home, holding a silver tray that reflects the ceiling decorated with wooden cubes and the lintel of the door. She looks astonished the tray, she feels as if she jumped in the void each time she goes trough the door getting into a labyrinth of cubes. We watch her hands and see that she is enjoying herself changing the image reflected in the tray as she moves them.

Going forward, staring at the reflected ceiling, playing and moving her hands.

Fragments of time and memory.

***José de Coca Leicher. Architect.***

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