

DRAWN CITIES OF XAVIER MONSALVATJE

Since those times, many artists - but also many amateurs, attracted by the spectacular results and the plastic qualities of ceramics, have used this material more or less success. The fortune and successes that are nearly always directly related to their artistic talent. There are still those who are called "ceramists", just because they paint pictures or make sculptures using ceramic techniques and materials .

In this context, Xavier Monsalvatje is one of the few exceptions in the national scene. Despite having training in ceramics, he has always used, in a conscious way, the media which best suits what he wants to express. So, since 1996 he has painted bleak landscapes of industrial architecture that are full of suggestions about memory, social function and beauty of a declining engineering in a remarkable way with acrylics on wood or cardboard. Simultaneously, he will use fired stoneware and a mesh of different materials to make his personal containers - that are also linked to the post-industrial world that take us back imaginatively to the conservation of many enigmatic, and sometimes seemingly dangerous, remains. In addition, the drawing on paper will be the technical lead in a good part of his work and specifically for the completion of the Cosmopolis series. The series of which he now presents to Barcelona. It is the latest production, which also includes ceramic vases and plates that make representations of his particular contribution- bridging the temporal, conceptual and metalanguage gaps- to the invisible cities the writer Italo Calvino is going to create .

This continuous and imaginative work of Xavier Monsalvatje, owed much to the language of comics, reveals itself as an advanced study of a creative process that brings the integration between its drawn metropolis and some aspects of traditional ceramics. The use of the freehand and brush painting technique on an enamel covering, blue on white paste, which both are going to be shown in the Manises ceramics of the first third of the twentieth century, bestowing these works with a more popular character- because it is impossible not to associate them with household objects close to the experiences of an adult, and yet manages to enrich the meaning of new shades by using well-known three-dimensional shapes. Thus, the dishes of a slightly concave surface of this series, painted by Monsalvatje, refer us to the sphere and, by association, the "glass spheres" that imaginary models of the metropolis, Fedora, contained - according to Calvino's narrative. On their part, the vases with the contours of a body in revolution provide that touch of mystery that is always unable to access the inevitable dark side. While it is difficult not to fall into the temptation to surround them, or to grab them with your hands and rotate them to provide your eyes a reading that the author offers us without the solution of continuity. "The traveler goes round and round and he has nothing more than doubts, without ever distinguishing the parts of the city, he also mixes up the parts he has clear."

For any case, we will be seduced by Monsalvatje's megaurban landscapes because, despite its graphic language with science-fiction overtones, they are imbued with contemporary reality, consciousness of being immersed in the present moment, within a vortex of no return, where the prominence of habitats decreases from day to day. Since it is clear that the current city captures and dissolves the individual in the mass citizen's report which are the fear of crime, to be controlled by powerful groups and manipulated by the media. In this scenario the art could aydarnos to see more clearly.

Thus, each traveler approaching the cities drawn on ceramics, and also the role of Xavier Monsalvatje, interpret them according to their mood and the collective historical situation. When in the mid-twentieth century, Picasso and Miro were going to break into the field of ceramics with all their creative power and great influence on the plastic arts, their efforts - inspired by the more understated ceramics from the Far East - that Llorens Artigas and Alfons Blat had made were totally locked up. among many other European ceramicists, to banish all alienated narrative connotation of creative expression of the ceramic material itself and its conjunction with purified forms based on the container. From that moment, the possibility that ceramics would manage to establish itself as an independent artistic specialty of painting and sculpture would definitely not be feasible, unlike what would happen with photography.

There will be those who imagine remnants of frustrated desires of incommunication, of alignment and medium, and also those who believe that to stand before fragmented views of a metropolis of chaotic activity, led by a new species of trade unions in which in the end, nature rebels as an omen of the future that awaits us if we aren't able to react quickly. Others however may die, seduced by the postmodern aesthetic of a set of skyscrapers and architectural structures, made with impossible engineering, communicated with streets that revolve over themselves like a rope. Because they believed, of course, that one of the non-explicit keys in these works is to enable each recipient to become a person endowed with the power of freedom that enables us to invent, with the intimate joy, the cities that the author describes.

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