

Marcela Gonzalez – *The Backstage of the Visible*

Almost as if she were trying to emulate Miguel Angel, Marcela Gonzalez's work gravitates between sculpture and painting. A sculptor above all and with a point of view that "paints from the bones", her works bring us closer to an academic training that lies latent and doesn't allow itself to be completely hidden even when the most contemporary interventions try to challenge this balanced structural composition. The knowledge of the technique is present even in the attempts to avoid it because its original source of inspiration has been both the images of Antiquity and the echoes that they have left in the Renaissance, the Baroque and even today. With her work, Marcela draws bridges between materialities to be present in large-format paintings but with special emphasis on volume. Resin, plaster, marble, cement, patinated iron, enamels and pigments give life to the forms, whether in oil paintings on canvas, in bas-reliefs or in crushing bulk sculptures.

De santos y demonios (About saints and demons 2017-8), *Tus palabras y tu mar (Your words and your sea 2019)*, *No te detengas Artemisa (Don't stop Artemisa 2016-5)* are some of the series of paintings where the animality inherent to the human being emerges. They are visceral works; the colors strike because of their forcefulness and their opulent, almost overwhelming presence. According to the artist, all of them are works that are born from a place that seeks to recognize itself in the search for its identity. And the same happens with the sculptures, regardless of the time in which we stand or the execution of the series we choose, all of Marcela's work is guided by a common thread that strongly speaks of an artist who finds in the representation of the human figure, a way to plastically sublimate her feelings. Series such as *Silencio (Silence 2011)*, *Renacida (Reborn 2016)* or *Faunos (Fauns 2017)* are the prelude to the most recent works that seem to sprout like a spring. *Miradas de tiempo no tiempo (Glances of time no time 2019-2020)*, *Enlazados (Linked 2020)*, *Tres cabezas (Three heads 2020)* and *Muros (Walls 2020)* are examples of a moment of great creative effervescence. And I would like to detain especially in these last works because I believe that there is partially condensed, an interest in defining that story of being, a being that is the product of its actions which model it in time and space. The works of this last period reduce their scale: it no longer seems to be the huge torsos or the large-format canvases that attract the artist's attention, but rather the multidisciplinary, mixed technique that crosses the pieces playing with combinations such as the framed relief with the plaster, the enamel on a drawer with graffiti on the *Tres cabezas (Three heads)* or the glass capsules on marble bases that contain the patinated resin of some of the pieces from *Miradas de tiempo no tiempo (Glances of time no time)*. There appears the importance of a small continent such as the capsule, giving the piece located inside of it, that status of "relic" that invites you to observe without touching, needing protection beyond its own materiality as if it were a fragile spirit that is preserved from the outside. What the continent preserves is an essence that for some reason, unlike other works, Marcela Gonzalez chooses to care as if it were the rose that sets time - or no time? - of "Beauty and the Beast" ...

The *Muros (Walls)* are especially attractive because of the prominence of the most basic material with the immaculate strength of white, works of pure plaster where human heads - many of them androgynous - emerge from a burst of "solid waves" creating each of the plates, an autonomous speech but seen as a whole, they reveal a balanced story that goes through different temperaments while they lose and regain their serenity alternately. The

artist focuses on the emotions expressed not so much in the faces but in the way they are presented: metaphors of rough seas that allude to uncontrollable passions, finally finding their escape in the work. Some pieces invite us to travel the eddies and others focus us, quiet us and allow us to breathe in to continue the journey. Separate cases are the walls located on small pedestals; it's there where Marcela introduces the word, literature combined with childhood memories. Selected literary fragments crossed by the sieve of sensitivity, without much rationality, these works draw on their bases part of Calderón de la Barca's writing in "Life is a dream" and the monologue of Segismundo or "El Aleph" by Jorge Luis Borges.

Marcela Gonzalez speaks of a "*constant search, almost desperate, to get to see the backstage of the visible*". There, the silence, the emptiness, the unspoken, the muted cries, are present in matter, take on human forms, give account of a reality that inhabits behind like a shadow that gains in size, widely exceeding the silhouette of the figure, like the base of the iceberg that is always greater than what is visible. But the figure is always present: voluptuous bodies often fragmented, heads, arms, torsos, necks with a clear aspiration to ideals of beauty, with touches of quality and precise workmanship, travel back in time between a gaze at the sources of the past and a approach to the readings of a present that promote the revaluation of the "imperfect", perhaps one of the most powerful emblems of the 21st century.

So be it.

Lic. María Carolina Baulo, August 2020