

The work of Jesús Palomino (Seville, 1969), has been viewed in Barcelona, the city where he now lives and works, in a number of group exhibitions of varying scope and ambition. And although, strictly speaking, this is not his first solo exhibition we could well regard it as such in the sense that his work may be seen and analysed in greater depth and breadth than on previous occasions.

Jesús Palomino's work is not removed from a movement seen in certain contemporary sculpture and installation, vocationally more ontological than physical, which is defined by an evident concern for the creation of a space understood more as a *locus* or habitat capable of redesigning the possible place to be occupied by the individual and psychological consciousness at a moment when the tyranny wielded by techno-scientism shows little interest, and in fact the opposite is true, in the creation of a specific space in which freedom and self-knowledge can find their own place. We could bring into play many names interested in the *elevation* of an unlikely model of survival. And for all of them, similarly to Jesús Palomino, we could say that their main artistic concern consists in the translation into a specific language, notwithstanding the uncontrolled plurality of that language, of the well-known statement by Heidegger that "Man occupies the place of Nothingness", and in what house – in what mind, thought, conceptual corpus – might that Nothingness find shelter from the harshness and aggression of a lifestyle increasingly removed from the structures generating humanism and civilisation.

It would be no more than a half-truth (and more particularly a dubious, shaky one) to reduce Jesús Palomino's work to the condition of fragility (when not directly to that of transience) inherent in a work which we could regard, in its greatest desire of ambition, as bound to confront differing degrees and levels of interpretation and appreciation. However, that frailty, such only and exclusively in terms of the poverty of materials employed, is used by the artist to establish a sort of jetty from which we are invited to step on board a shipwreck: to oppose and to bring into crisis different types of confronting binomials. Material fragility/violence of thought; physical frailty/creative power; ocular weakness/perceptive consistency; conceptual resistance/formal laxity; narrative abasement/abstract intensity; figurative asthenia/strength in the use of colour ... After all, we would have

to admit: it *is* a fragile work which talks to us of the fragility of our systems of appreciation and judgement. But in turn, that fragility does not exist as an autonomous rhetorical element – something which would imply a poverty of action and thought - but as the fuse activating the critical device of the confronted valences numerated above.

For this occasion, Jesús Palomino has built – idealised, dreamt – his third house, to which he has coupled the presentation of a series of collages on paper, as well as a number of works which lack the physical (yet not the conceptual) reach of the house, and which occupy an intermediate stage between it and the collages although leaning more towards the former. Palomino's houses are built on the solid foundations we have been spelling out, and the paltry weakness of its physical structure seems to us like a sort of intelligent romantic reading of late modernity more displaced than exiled, more cornered than banished, more stigmatised than deported. Not exempt from a strange and muffled violence, the desperate mixture of wood, paint, cardboard, wool, fabric, models, and a variety of extremely humble objects build as much an impossible house as a sound, albeit real, structure of thought, almost a life system. There is also the possibility of looking at these houses with a declared criticism, or at least, an activation of resources inducing doubt and scepticism, of a way of life based upon the fierce pragmatism of the immediate achievement of (economic) goals, but also to a certain response –by opposition- to that artistic practice which, too easily (not exempt from opportunism), allies itself with the latest technical or scientific discovery.

The collages on paper deserve special comment. They are indeed extremely delicate works, avant-garde in their execution and vocation, anorexic by-products of a Bauhaus attempting to reedit itself after the cataclysm, and where the teachings from which it borrows its inspiration (Klee, to name just one source which, although crucial, might also be regarded as a distant and fruitful bouquet) possess the same cadence of fragile constructive organicism. The colour used in these extraordinary and extremely beautiful collages displays the same quality as the paint used in the houses: it is not so much the colour that awakens our enthusiasm, as the intensification – dialectic rhetorization – of the psychological interpretation of colour.

The houses, the work by Jesús Palomino, occupy the space of nothingness, but also concur with Mies van der Rohe's claim that the house of this time does not exist yet.

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