

A NEW SPATIAL DIMENSION

Since the last few decades of the 20th century, the art of sculpture - conceived essentially as an indigenous artistic language and creator of objects in space- has undergone a progressive displacement and, what is worse, a worrying loss of conceptual definition. Sculptural creations and volumetric work which had once been authentic emblems of tradition in western art, seemed to have shifted from being a reflection in space to become a space of reflection, in the wake of the successive spatial waves that arose from minimalism, after the creation of installations, and following on from the emergence of design as a creator of three-dimensional concepts.

A space in which shapes created by materials that could not exactly be classed as noble or, at least, classic (marble, bronze, wood...) had to coexist -in (apparent) harmony-, with materials of a purely industrial nature. Not to mention the wide variety of options using such very different and diverse strategies such as video, light, words, photography, drawings, staging and even painting, which led to classifying the space as an installation.

This abundance of mediums and expressive languages, characteristic of the postmodern culture, led certain authors -as is the case of Rosalind Krauss- to affirm their definition with a well-known double negative "*sculpture is what architecture and landscape are not*", broadening their horizons to new artistic territories, in relation to the concept of the expanded field.

A new spatial dimension, the exhibition put together by Ana Serratosa, emphasizes this new landscape formed by the three-

dimensional within the visual arts, establishing analogies regarding shape and concepts which, on occasions, start with a picture plane and end up taking on a third dimension. The exhibition is a most attractive and varied selection from eight artists who coexist perfectly, and who, -consistent with these changing strategies regarding space and installations- overcome, modify and enrich the concepts traditionally associated with sculptural objects.

Considered one of the most significant British representatives of Land Art, **David Nash** (Esher, England, 1945) has gradually shifted his attention from direct intervention with nature to creating sculptures from the wood of trees: oaks, yews, birches and redwoods. He uses these sculptures to reflect on certain aspects of such a unique material, covering all possible stages of its life cycle, starting with the flowering of the tree, its felling, its devastation, and even, on numerous occasions, its own carbonization. In this way, he attempts to strike a harmonic balance between the intrinsic characteristics of the wood, its origin, the process of shaping the pieces, and the space in which the sculptures will be finally placed. In his own words "Using a tree to discover the reality of the elements, the very essence of time and space".

Born in Santiago de Chile in 1972, **Iván Navarro** has enjoyed an extensive international career since the end of the 1990s, after settling in New York. Artistically speaking, he creates sculptures and installations using basically industrial materials (neon signs, fluorescent lights, mirrors) as well as diverse optic mechanisms, which allow him to communicate a very personal discourse on historical, social and political issues. In this way, for example, he uses a source of energy such as electricity and gives it a double value: an aesthetic value and also a symbol of power and destruction. In many

of his works, the appearance of textual messages takes on a special meaning.

The polysemic and eloquent world of objects, the majority unwanted and therefore with a significance that is initially different to the one they are finally given, forms the territory in which **Martina von Meyenburg** (Zurich, Switzerland, 1975) usually develops her artistic work. These elements are combined and structured in such a way so as to evoke sensations in the viewer related to time -past, present and future- and the ambiguous nature of his/her personal memory. With their inherent poetry, these elements suggest new mental associations and also new ways of looking and perceiving.

The evolution in the work of **Bill Thompson** (Ipswich, Massachusetts, 1957) is a clear and fitting example of the changes that have taken place over the last few decades within the field of expanded painting. This artist initiated his career as a painter, bordering on minimalist precepts, and gradually become interested in the objectness of a painting. His attitude to space became more open and he began to explore new possibilities of chromatics and shape, in addition to colours and subject matter. By applying industrial automotive paint to polyurethane blocks, he creates three-dimensional shapes that have a certain organic feel to them, and which usually unfurl upon the walls of the exhibiting space.

Jaume Plensa (Barcelona, 1955), one of our artists with the most varied career and international recognition, -as well as being one of the most versatile-, uses sculpture in a very personal and recognisable way. He incorporates many resources related to poetry, language and thought -such as literature, psychology, biology and history- into the obvious and significant qualities and characteristics of the shape and texture of the material (steel, resins, glass, water or sound) he uses. In this sense, he frequently turns to the textual and

conceptual universe of words to construct three-dimensional structures, with which he earns a place in a very unique landscape within the world of sculpture.

The perceptive and sensitive experience of reality surrounding us is one of the main distinguishing features, artistically speaking, of **Massimo Bartolini** (Cecina, Italy, 1962). By using a wide range of expressive mediums such as sculptures, performances and photography, amongst others, he creates spaces in which he intervenes, modifies, and exhibits. Particular sensorial resources such as light, sound or even certain smells, are used to prompt the viewer to reflect on what can be objective and immutable, inviting them to discover other possible realities.

Stephan Balkenhol (Fritzlar, Germany, 1957) conceives and creates his sculptures in a subtle and most personal territory. His works fall within the categories of contemporary art and the avant-garde but, at the same time, he takes ideas from the tradition of certain classic sculptural processes. His archetype, which is unquestionably recognisable, consists of small figures of men and women, frequently standing and in seemingly everyday attitudes and postures, which reveal certain hidden keys that try to establish another more mysterious relationship with the viewer. His pieces are nearly always sculptured in wood, which is not smoothed and the marks left by carving are still visible. The polychromy he applies to the sculpture, helps reinforce the idea of them being real living objects.

Joan Brossa (Barcelona, 19 January 1919 – 30 December 1998) ought to be considered the most important experimental poet at the Catalan vanguard of the 20th century, and also one of the most prominent figures in that field on a national level. The author of diverse works that cover all registers of discursive writing, his

contribution to the world of visual arts is equally significant. His visual poetry and object poems stand out amongst his experimental practices. It is precisely this field of artistic investigation, strongly influenced by surrealist aesthetics, in which he carried out some of his most brilliant and successful achievements. In his hands and in his thoughts, the object acquires new values and meanings, full of symbolic and profoundly poetic interpretations.

Francisco Carpio, september 2018