

Correction

The second exhibition by María Angeles Díaz Barbado at the gallery arises from an attempt to reconstruct an unknown and hitherto unseen landscape. A selection of paintings, mixed media drawings, and photographs are intended to introduce us to a place where the decisive episodes in the lives of Roithamer and his closest relations unfold, and thus, together with the landscape, constitute the novel of the same title by Thomas Bernhard about the project of building an ideal and unusual architecture, an inhabitable cone, in the exact centre of a Central-European forest. The claustrophobic scheme of construction-correction-deconstruction is developed with a repetitive and obsessive rhythm, while also demonstrating the emotional shortcomings of contemporary man.

Despite the continual allusions to a specific location, the context can be extrapolated to increasingly decadent and unhappy Western society. Loneliness, misunderstanding, insecurity, dissatisfaction, disorientation; these are feelings with which we live most of our lives, and also constants in the oeuvre of this artist who therefore identifies with her work in this case more than ever.

Roithamer's project, which was continually revised, and fruit of a long period of observation and study in pursuit of a profound knowledge of all the elements needed to achieve a perfect work, fails; its objective is never accomplished. It is an imperfect, incomplete project, ultimately like the aspirations of its author, to create a utopian space designed for salvation, removed from everything that harms and destroys, a space conceived for happiness yet that carries the germ of annihilation. Just as happens in life, there is no perfect concluded work. It is impossible to determine the end of a process and its ultimate purpose; the only thing that exists is the certainty of the process in a succession of stages.

The exhaustiveness with which the character repeatedly approaches an extenuating plan resembles the indefatigably tenacious attitude of the artist, who also has an idea, and is capable of designing a creative strategy spurred by the reading of a stimulating text with which she identifies, as well as by values and convictions related to immersion in the protective silence. Following her customary method, she works in series documenting the diverse phases of the cone and points of view from the path that, winding through the thick forest, only accessible to the initiated, leads to it. Order, immaculateness, sobriety and skill in affording the balanced dose of emotion and rationality are the secrets of a masterful formula whose poetics is based on economy of means and expressionistic gesture in line and sketch, along with the serial aspect and the notion of process, linked to certain practices of the ready-made that are tangentially related to minimalism and arte povera, in a neo-conceptual environment.

The binomial repetition-difference imbues the exhibition with a cadence that, in turn, reinforces the dialectic of a discourse that transcends the linear narrative and teleological motivation. Along these lines, both *Correction* by Thomas Bernhard and the musical series *Difference/Repetition* by the likewise Austrian Bernhard Lang, maintain an evident affinity with some of Gilles Deleuze's postulates. As for the work with which we are concerned it tends to establish new temporal categories of perception in the visual and intellectual realms.

The arrangement of the works is meant to convey the notion of archive, inasmuch as it is a process, structure and system of creation, thus reinforcing the artist's intention. In an expanded and metaphorical sense, the archive, as formulated by Victor del Río, possesses an aesthetic dimension. Derrida relates it to

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psychoanalysis, a practice dealing with the archive of memory, the remembering of events, to seek a healing catharsis in the encounter with truth. The archive involves recording and registering, giving rise to any type of series, enabling classification, the establishment of order and sequences with disparate orientations, and, last but not least, shedding light on events.

The omnipresence of landscape mirrors its significance in Bernhard's work and situates us in another orbit of reflections. It is neither a matter of nature reproduced, nor does it stem from a natural reality, but from a construction based on a text in which it seeks its equivalent. Another one of the leading characters, the landscape of hostile climate and contours in which a picturesque unfinished architecture is set, is reminiscent of the romantic concept of the genre. The epic rendering of forms and motifs and the transcendence of reality to realize a sublime effect, as Yarza expresses, make Friedrich its renovator, as the sculptor David d'Anghers had already noted, proclaiming him to be the creator of a new subgenre: "*the tragedy of landscape*, capable of stirring all the faculties of the soul". His works are not, therefore, images of Nature, but of an ungraspable metaphysical feeling.

The landscape that María Angeles Díaz Barbado reconstructs is, in turn, the reconstruction of a human identity, an inner, psychological, landscape. The diverse layers of information that it contains have been organized from the experience of knowledge, looking and observing, the reciprocal interaction of which adds meaning to them. As is the case with Friedrich, the border between real and imaginary is unclear; the tension between these two categories produces a certain amount of ambiguity. Also vague is the appreciation that Bernhard's characters have of their own experiences and memories, as doubts about their veracity constantly emerge.

One of the most interesting keys to approaching the interpretation of *Correction* is found in the continual shift between the realm of textuality and that of hypertextuality, for beneath the appearance of extreme simplicity lies a complex network of signifiers and contents that afford a vivifying dynamism.

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