

MENTAL AND CREATIVE ORDER IN DANIEL SOLOMONS' WORK

“Despite what you may think, the events are not reversible. The fact that you are able to enter, does not mean that you are able to get out; entrances do not turn into exits and nobody guarantees you that the door you used to go in will still be there when you look for it an instant later”

AUSTER, Paul : The country of the things. 1987

The study of the undercurrent relations between science and culture, and more specifically between the brain functions and artistic creation, are nowadays a current affair which has coined a new word, neuroculture, subject that, through new advances in the investigation of brain processes tries to offer new ideas about our options and preferences on thoughts, behaviour or feelings. As it could be read a few weeks ago in a Sunday cultural supplement : “If we want to decode the perceptions and the feelings and the thoughts and ideas that make human societies move, we have to know the mechanisms through which the brain produces them.” The exhaustive knowledge of chemical reactions, the function of the nerves might lead us to a future and more accurate knowledge of the conception of the world, of our life and therefore, of our own way to perceive and produce that fraction of reality, apparently so useless as it is art. That, however, provokes fear as well as suspicion; would we really like to be able to recognise the mechanisms that set the patterns of creativity? Is it not, precisely, that enigma the one communicating the artistic action, the art, with the fascinating territory of magic? Perhaps, if the questions are simplified to binary systems, mathematical equations or chemical formulae, neither you- dear reader- nor I would be reading these pages.

This entire preamble has a reason to be in the presence of Daniel Solomons' paintings and the circumstances of his artistic and vital vicissitude, so entwined. Because, for an artist self-defined half Anglo-Saxon, of Jewish descent, educated between Madrid, London and New York, that now resides in Malaga, “to stay” is not a transitive verb. Permanent, is only a word for whom after a brain stroke at an unusual age has been marked in his methodology and patterns with the daily routine. To start from scratch, to lose the memory, to forget the most basic mechanisms of action and coordination, must

be a sword pending from the ceiling when there is the possibility of this happening again, nobody knows when or under what circumstances . That this process of learning was the engine that made him advance in life can be summarized in one of his sentences: “to be being”. To stand still means to give up, to put the inevitability of the future, of fate in a permanent frame. “To die you only need to be alive“ says a popular saying. Should we, therefore, be always expectant? What do we live for if the result cannot be avoided? Something that we have never asked the artist although we do not need to do so to know the answer: he never forgot the necessity to continue creating. Without leaving all the analysis to the conditioning personal experiences, we must bear in mind that Solomons´ art is ruled by very well defined patterns marked in the line of a genuine lyric and effective abstraction, which drinks from several sources. I must confess that looking closely the first weft of one of his canvas, not in its total dimension but as a fragment, I could see certain passages of Hernandez Pijuan. It might have been by chance, but the knowledge contained in those imperfect and fragile nets, vibrating and magic at the same time, that suppose the passage in the seventies from special positions to a much more contemplative kind of painting in the trajectory of the Catalan painter – I especially remember a majestic work “Llapis plom 4 H-H-B-2B-4B-6B”, the series “ Vertical Line” and the graphic series of the nineties “ Del Jardin” and “Roturat”-, it seems to revive in some of these paintings.

It would not be difficult to condition the plastic and aesthetic options to the dialectic contained in the antonymous Memory/Non memory. The weft we use to depict a file system so complex is as fictitious as effective. If we were compelled to draw an abstract diagram of the memory, we would certainly draw a sort of honeycomb with watertight compartment cells. Beyond the pictorial dimension, Solomons´ interest to capture the confrontation between the absence of memory and the means that human beings use to avoid the oblivion will be shown in a future project called “Post-it”.

Thousands of unwritten square yellow papers have a similarity with the well known work “ The most important things are not things” by Esther Partegas, shown at Arco 06; however, while the steel post-it of the Catalan artist is only the base for poetry, in Solomons´ case poetry falls upon the daily naked object.

These relationships are reinforced when discovering the concomitances between his woks “The grey suit” and the summary “El guadern gris” by Josep Pla, one of his favourite authors, title of the diary that the controversial and prolific author from Ampurdan rewrote for a long period of his life, I say rewrote because he continuously

changed his notes from the perspective of the differed memory, as a way to reach the impossible perfection.

About this controversial concept, the constant and unavoidable presence of imperfection in any process leading to the achievement of perfection is another of the recurrent attitudes of the artist. Recent studies have related beauty with the symmetry of face. And this is probably true, as true as attraction has nothing to do with beauty. Nothing seems to be more attractive than the light and subtle imperfection of the non similarity, of the non symmetric. Geometry becomes imperfect; it is polluted in its neatness. The post-modern aesthetic has fed from proportional distortion, from what in another time exemplified ugliness, imperfection, excess.

The lines are not cut in axial axis, they do not even try to keep continuity; on the contrary they break up and become twisted, they are interrupted leaving empty spaces, gaps with no information or traces of what they once might have been. Like a universe where everything seems to have been swept away by the wind of desolation. The missing link of the chain, the absence of a word in the middle of a sentence destroys any logical structure, condemning all systems to a gradual and inexorable disappearance.

“The system of classification was totally disorganized, and with so many books missing, it was almost impossible to find the one we were looking for. Bearing in mind that there were seven floors of files, the fact that one book was not in the right place was as if it did not exist any more.”

In relation with his idiomatic adscription, Solomons confronts directly with the Hegira of competitors that follow the most radical post colour field, the one that denies the illusion of profundity and assures the impact over the power of colour under a scheme of simplicity and of disproportionate dimension. Our cosmopolitan artist, on the contrary, is convinced that vibration comes from concealment and blending between an apparently neutral bottom -although few times it is so, since it is an unavoidable and indispensable support of projection and the backing on which it is inscribed, even when it is not figurative-, and a superposed form that acts with jealousy retreating itself or opening according to reasons not totally unknown. On these frames and concealments we can find resemblances with the German artists Marco Breuer and Tom Früchtl.

With less showiness than them, but with an undoubted parallelism in the impact, the last paintings of Solomons may also be related with the series of Amelia Moreno “Iridia” (2006) and “Sobre territorio oscuro” (2005). The inclusion of a main framework that reacts over a background as a neutralized magma and as an impulsive force, work in a

similar way although the latter purpose is very different. In the case of Solomons the will is based in a speech that strings together his own personal experience with the creative work which serves at the same time as a therapy that staves off any fears. Any of these canvases can and must be defined as too large for discovery and classicistic as to their effect. Despite his acquired formation derived from design, there is no doubt of the wide knowledge about pictorial techniques of the artist residing in Malaga. In the works “ El traje gris” there is an evident formal structure from classical painting : the shadow, the volume acquired and pretended through the union and separation of parallel and perpendicular lines which seem to fold or inflate the canvas, always with the delicacy of acquired gestures. These are the tints that at a different scale we notice in the folds of Zurbaran, in the infinity neutrality of Velazquez, in the consistent backgrounds of Ribera.

Finally, the notion of unattainableness is reached with time: each of Solomons´ paintings is never the same, the more you look into it the more details you find. This makes the onlooker feel an unbalanced state that mixes discomfort and curiosity, perhaps because he realises -as Wittgenstein said- the complete collection of sensorial and empirical data gathered by reasoning and science are not and will never be all that exists”.

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