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PANDEMIC AND DIASPORA

In the last years we have talked about the irruption of the process - which is more and more common among contemporary creators - of incorporation of current social and political matters in the artwork.

This position does not imply, as some people can try to make us believe, to defend a particular recognizable and selective aesthetic. In our opinion, a direct incorporation of contents, ideas and images is produced, which operates the contradictions of our contemporary society but is also part of a continuous matter in the creative work itself and in the most current praxis.

The versatility and freedom of formal and conceptual performance is one of the most welcome characteristic of the contemporary artist and the incorporation in the wide referential horizon of metaphors of those contradictions of our society and the most modern globalized world, does not prevent those metaphors from being applied to the artistic and more current processes and languages.

The famous poet from Granada, Luis García Montero, in a recent interview on the radio, in the time of the past Iraq War, took advantage of the moment to say that for him and for many creators, thinkers, artists and intellectuals, it was impossible nowadays to write and create by disengaging from the local or the world socio-political context in which we are immersed.

I do not know if we are living in the "Bad times for the lyrical poetry" as the song by Germán Copini in the 1980s said, but if there is lyrical poetry, and certainly there is, it is shown in a very different way, built not only about the fiction of a personal drama but about the reality of a world drama which is supported by absolutely immoral macroeconomic principles.

After a manipulative process of salvation and liberation of states and yokes, previously supported by today's world liberators and with the silent complicity of the so powerful Western World, there is only a macrostructure of companies, worldwide multinationals, authentic superpowers that control the states, by making more and more suppressive and impossible the appearance of the voice of disagreement that is hidden by them under the red carpet of their double standard as Pedro Déniz proposes.

Davos, Río, El Cairo, against the G7. The control of the world media versus thousands of calls in the network.

Meanwhile the pandemics such as AIDS and malaria, wars, deprivation of fundamental rights, health deficiency, unemployment and starvation cruelly ravage the so-called Third World.

Some year ago I heard a friend, who is a philosopher and frequently attends to international thinkers forums, desperately states: “-Africa is not taking into account” They will let it disappear” there are other priorities such as rebuilding and integrating the old countries belonging to the soviet bloc, trying to develop Latin America, helping the Asian expansion, bringing peace to Middle East and at the end, always at the end it is Africa, dislocated, vanishing in its own dying loneliness.

It must seem a cliché but statistics about mortality, health, wars, human rights violation, poverty, diseases and famine, starvation indeed, speak for themselves and are a faithful and bloodcurdling witness of the reality of this continent.

For a long time the Canary artists Pedro Déniz and José Luzardo have incorporated topics that have a lot to do with the unavoidable realities in their artistic praxis and they have added, in my opinion, an attitude, which other Canary artists do not work with as it would be expected given the geographical nearness with Africa, such as having a look at the forgotten African continent, a look that even coming from this continent deals in fact with the misery of the contemporary man and society.

Both artists, I think, as I have pointed out at the beginning of this brief text, take part in a very special, subtle and, at the same time, overwhelming way of understanding the artistic practice as an opportunity to freely go through the multiple and various possibilities and ways of the most current aesthetic to which they belong to as active members, as builders and dismantlers of it by adding to it an engaged and in parallel open speech about realities that has to do with nowadays contradictions.

In José Luis Luzardo’s work AIDS pandemic is displayed in an absolute and exquisite formal asepsis by incorporating his deliberate artistic activity with references of conceptual and poetic visual elements of tremendous sourness as the apparition of his trapped virgins in condom – prisons, soundproof glass bells of great utility for our Christian Western double standard. His various proposals of objects are built in a melting pot of condom-objects with different levels of interpretation, under the symbols of religion, sex and global epidemic disease.

During recent years, Pedro Déniz has intensively worked on topics about the western morality and the misery and contradictions that it creates. In this project he goes on developing his works on carpets, as the installation presented in his project *Nature and Coexistence* in Esles, Cantabria, Spain in 2003, with his *Thought Trench*. These red carpets for dignitaries, and, as the artists states, they are built with the misery and blood of others, they hide under them the murkiest objects of our conscience.

In his project *The Trip of the Empty Bottles* the welcome red carpets are waiting in the four cardinal points of an anonymous place for the arrival of the desperate ones in the coasts of a better dream world. It is just that, a dream and a fool’s paradise, a cruel swindle about the misery of the unforgotten people. Those Images of the red carpets washed by the dying sea foam are as hard as beautiful. Pedro Déniz manages to position us in contradictory territories

with a deep emotional content and in parallel to display a controlled and attractive aesthetical finish. This is something that the artist subtly controls and that is shown with the same intensity in his series of Molotov cocktails.

Déniz and Luzardo, Luzardo and Déniz, Diaspora and Pandemic, Pandemic and Diaspora, two positions for two tragedies and utopia and hope are always in the horizon.

Orlando Britto Jinorio / July 2003, Santander.