

GABRIEL AND THE REGENERATION OF THE FORM



Self-taught and in search of the highest form of artistic freedom, Gabriel (Badalona, 1954) works on the outline of forms, on the limits of personal identity, of an awareness of an uncertain destiny, existential anguish and metaphysical longing, in order to renew sculpture. Currently he teaches at the Massana School, in Barcelona.

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If, as he himself says, the human mind is like a 'hall of mirrors', the creative impulse his work creates has to find its space, 'provided by existence since the beginning of time', a place that is a question that needs to consolidate itself as an object and material, as if it were an 'unconscious library' that builds us emotionally. For this reason, I see his work as an instrument of knowledge, an open process that distances itself from a system of closed thinking. The poetical, metaphorical and symbolic references make up the basis of a work in which art is seen as a perpetual question mark. It is an impulse which, according to Rafael Argullol, coincides with an 'eternal vision of art' and which, in spite of wearing different masks according to the time period, always questions the human condition and human behaviour.

One characteristic of his work is the feeling of regeneration of the form, always open to new additions without breaking the natural evolution of a singular discourse which we find beneath its forms. It is from this point on, from this constant flow, that everything is modified via a formal multiplicity that incorporates distinct resources.

'Plectopos', the exhibition held in Espai Vol- Art of the Fundació Vila Casas, does not present us with a theme, but rather with an attitude of a particular reading, where he, aside from re-founding the form, incorporates other resources and new materials. He once wrote that, 'form is material's dream' and, 'perhaps we make forms in order to contemplate this dream'.

In his attitude towards the creative process it is important that he does not consider art to be an idea that has become manifest, as a trace of 'the idea printed in matter' but rather as an intermediary between 'human doubt and enigma', this simultaneous 'reveal and guard' that Argullol seeks to analyse in the conversation he had with him for the exhibition catalogue. Something that I also recall, 'the enigma of collaboration', of meetings with the image or with the gesture before thought, that John Berger deals with in his writings when he speaks of the artist as an intermediary, but above all, of that species of 'hospitality' that receives the creative impulse when it takes shape before the constant interrogation of art, because if our attitudes truly coincide it is precisely in the belief that art has always existed and answers to the same impulse.

From his beginnings, some thirty years ago, his proposal was already different in the context of the sculpture of the time, always situated 'between visible forms of material and the possible forms of art'. Throughout his development, via different forms of expression, he has been consistent in his work and we always find links, analogies and correlations in time, where forms are (according to his reflections) 'the primordial mud that reason shapes to extract language'. Far from conventional culture, with its exhibitions, installations and theoretical or poetical texts, he chose a singular creative path that, according to the needs of each period, has been channelled by more sensory or symbolic paths.

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