

Translucent

If the word virtual would not be a common place in the current times, we could say that one of the particular traits of Francisco Ugarte's work is the creation of virtual spaces by means of large and extended reflective effort (we could almost say calculus) with a plastic equation establishing a relationship between perception and context.

This reflection expresses itself on a paradoxical double movement: Ugarte's seemingly cold, distant works make a clear contrast with the emotive tone provoked on the viewer.

Observing from a neutral, almost impersonal but objective point of view, surveying space from a cautious distance, effectively turns out a reflected image of objects in which the forms acquire a new animated dimension of a discreet emotional nuance.

The Severe, rigorous, non-peaceful, almost inexpressive distance characterizing the artist's work can be suddenly taken as its antithesis: an invitation to observe objects (or their virtual representation) directly, on the emotive terms established by the artist, latent and recondite, but lying and awaiting for the viewer to bestow space, time and attention.

The visual sensitiveness boasted by this artist finds its base on thoughtful calculations of the possibilities presented by a concrete space. Perhaps, as a consequential fact of his education as an architect, it is possible to perceive Ugarte's obsession for the form, most of the times, expressed by means of squares and cubes. In addition, Ugarte's works undertake perspective as a means for expression, as for instance in some of his works where the site containing the piece is reproduced using a scaled model.

Reflections about the space contained within a space, about the otherness of the object provided by the negative space and above all, his fascination for using or representing aleatory, uncertain and fortuitous dynamics of light represent some other readable constants of his work. These elements can result in color, atmosphere and perception changes; elements that the artist invites us to share with an elemental attitude of perplexity and awe.

His works constitute a translation of optic and luminescent effects into the modeled space. Objects suddenly appear, or change under the reflex that they produce on the environment, an initially distant atmosphere that under a slow pace acquires the connotations of a spiritual experience. There is tension between the object and its reflex, and therefore, an unanswered question regarding the (virtual) nature of the (in)existent object. His works are part of a context, in a sort of reciprocal communication between the object and its surroundings.

The two pieces presented for *Traslúcido* respond to these premises. In the first one, using some kind of white cube, the artist closes access to the two main areas in Orozco's studio and introduces powerful reflectors to illuminate this space. In this way, the artist separates the spectator, forcing a search for witnessing the elemental, subtle and essential spectacle of *seeing* the light. The second piece is a video in which the artist documents the visual disappearance of a pole slowly wrapped by the morning mist in countryside scenery.

As the rest of his works, in these two pieces we can witness Francisco Ugarte's sort of Zen visual exercise in which cold objects, distant in the begging, seem to click before our eyes and immediately after integrate harmoniously into an enchanted reality, set there since ever, but invisible.

Written by Baudelio Lara - November 2006