

BLACKGALLERY

Black Gallery is pleased to announce a new group exhibition by the Uruguay artists María Freire, Pati Fernández Graña y Julia Castagno. Entitled The Emancipation of Color, this exhibition presents a set of paintings in dialogue with sculptures.

Abstraction, minimalism, color and sobriety attract all these artists who seeks refuge in primary forms, which do not carry a definite meaning but rather a presence, just as real as it is mystical.

Opening February 8, 2016

About the structures that become light

Lic. Jacqueline Lacasa

Black Gallery brings together the work of Julia Castagno, Pati Fernandez Graña, and Maria Freire, three artists in whose work there can be appreciated different expressions of abstract art.

Today, on a global scale, in the investigations being conducted around the artistic practices, contemporary creators revisit and are in constant dialog with its predecessors, causing interaction between generations.

The set of pieces that are exhibited points in this direction, because it produces a provocative aesthetics synthesis that arise naturally, since in these three artists there is the evident intensity of the work and the quality to express its contemporaneity.

A concrete past

Maria Freire was a woman with a clear vocation for art, which materialized in an extensive and rich body of work and which surprises for the investigations that she carried out, both in its artistic chore and teaching. She was born in Montevideo in 1917, and studied in the Circle of Fine Arts with masters José Cuneo and Severino Pose, who as the artist said in interviews with me, they were pioneers to challenge what at that time was imposed like the "must be" in art. She made several journeys throughout her life, which were seedlings for her experimentations both in the conceptualization and concision of her works. During the 1960s her talent

expands with the possibility of living in Europe and make contact with the avant-garde of that time. She also worked as critic in the journal "Action" between 1962 and 1973; she was part of the "Group of non-figurative art", along with the artist José Pedro Costigliolo, reference of the geometric art in Uruguay who was her husband and companion of life in art. Awarded in different parts of the world and her own country, she participated in individual and collective exhibitions of great impact. The trajectory that characterizes the work of Freire, places the viewer in different moments of her explorations on medieval, and pre-Columbian objects that lead her to work with abstraction in planist and geometric series.

Maria Freire is one of the most important artists on concrete art in South America, her work schismatic, her nature untamed, and her active presence in the delivery of knowledge made her transcend, through a unique creation and as a key to understand the ways in which she was preparing the upcoming of contemporary art in Uruguay.

The abstract landscape of the life

Vibrant colours and forms that come from personal investigations on the modern and contemporary art characterize the work of **Pati Fernández**. Departing from figurative art and making an appropriation of the portraits that compose the affective

world of the artist, her work develops in the extrapolation of the traces that these portraits leave over time. The ungraspable overbearing of the form, the silhouette, the face, the experience that also is a vital landscape to remember the world of the affections, which she transforms into the real raw material of creation, when Fernández work becomes abstraction.

Each one of these pieces of this series "*Bonds*" is formed by way of small territories of colour, intercepted by borders of irregular lines, which break the plane, perhaps keeping the turns given by the contours of those portraits. Finally, the work is presented unpolluted, deep and multiform, the artist in her abstraction plays with colour as a matter and with the movement that is also light. The static figures are transformed into live processes; they leave the past in order to acquire power materializing in colour. In this way, she achieves the concision of planes in which originates the challenge to accept the future as something in change, content planes, full of silences, of transcendent forms; ultimately her painting reminds us of the *Nature of Being*.

The space of the light

Julia Castagno presents "*Flashes of a fractal*". Is a new synthesis that the artist made in the creation of concepts such as light, space, colour and matter. The pieces are assembled, forming structures of complex dynamics, which pop up into the space in a harmonic way, there are hundreds of sticks that irregularly connect and deploy again. This work has its background in one of the phases of her artistic project called: "*Model for survival*", which was presented in the EAC (Space for Contemporary Art) in Montevideo in May 2014 and that then went to the travelling exhibition "Ciclo" of the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB). It is noteworthy that this exhibition in Brazil began as collateral exhibition with the Bienal de São Paulo and then continued its journey toward Belo Horizonte, finishing

in Brasilia in March 2015. On that occasion the artist worked in a structure of more than one hundred thousand sticks that she assembled in an almost imperceptible way creating a multiform network, a job that defied time and patience. A work of contemplation and reflection on artistic practices today, the search for answers to questions such as the form in which we know, the dimensions in which the space and matter are handled in a time that determines the work, because ultimately it also marks the existence of a particular model to survive the ups and downs of the present. Of the finitude of that installation of immense size, comes a new synthesis: this is a set of fractals, of vibrant colours, made of sticks of beech wood and acrylic, which achieve volumes that break the space, move it and allow the light to invade, and its reflection operates with determination in a cosmogony to contemplate. Lydia Dona thinking, Romanian artist based in New York, is complementary to the work of Julia Castagno since she also intends to move toward a new place "where the labyrinth is accelerated and the intermediate states are states of unconscious, critics of difference and break". Mario Gradowczyk ¹ says the contemporary artists who seek to challenge the modernist absolutism, breaking with the judging or petrified structures of knowledge, are looking for new states of consciousness to generate a different connection with reality. In this way, "*Flashes of a fractal*", is light, because its transparency forms extended in space, are herded in a subtle manner and balanced, forming mobile systems, which are dispersed to go toward the new.

Crossing new lines from the South

This is a set of works that communicate among themselves in a trans-generational way, there are three artists looking for radical forms of experience and transcend the immediacy of perception without losing the illusion of the desire to the form. Freire's shapes and abstractions share a deep and permanent dialogue with Pati Fernández

and Julia Castagno, they do so almost as if we could see the designing of archaeology of light and matter in their works. These works lead us to the lines of concrete art, whose movement gave rise to great works based on simple shapes that are more complex in the execution of them. And that is precisely one of the areas of contact between these three artists: from simple actions they can reach new structures that become light for the thought and the essence of the spirit.

Jacqueline Lacasa

Graduated in Psychology, visual artist, curator and Cultural Manager, researcher of modern and contemporary art, specialist in the field of Visual culture. Director of the Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales de Uruguay (2007-2009). Member of International Association of AICA -art critics.

¹ Gradowczyk, Mario (2006). *“Arte Abstracto, cruzando líneas desde el sur”*. (Abstrac Art, crossing lines from the south). Universidad Tres de Febrero. Buenos Aires, Argentina



February, 2016

El Galpón del Molino

Garzón

www.blackgallery.net