

AIRBORNE SCORE

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It would certainly not be easy to find among painters someone who openly confessed his distance from literature, much less from poetry, because who more or less all would declare themselves not friends of poets, but assiduous readers of verse, with whom they would take for granted that they maintain an intimate and productive trade. It would be very difficult, I think, to find exceptions to this.

The modern tradition, let's call it that, once the relationship between words and images that was based on the old ecphrase was abolished, it began to weave a network of correspondences (to say it baudelerianly) or equivalences that could no longer count on the compartmentalization of the old trades and their particular rules, but with the opposite, that is, with the dissolution of those frontiers in the magma of a general abstraction - "total", Wagner called it-, which coincides with what we call "Art" today, thus, without distinction of disciplines. Hence the deliquescence to which painters tend to take refuge when they are made to think of poetry, by virtue of which and without further ado they will immediately declare their affinity and kinship with the poets. The opposite case -that of poets with respect to painting- is not traditionally passed, in general (it is worth repeating, knowing the glorious exceptions), by a fondness for what images are illustrative, for what they represent, if they represent anything at all.

But it is a different matter to find a painter who can accredit or prove in some almost forensic way this closeness to the art of words, in a more exact and effective way than the one simply alluded to through the equal artistic status of the two types of officiants. When I think about it, the most poetic painter -more truly poetic and closer to poetry - who comes to mind is Alejandro Corujeira. Born, like Oliverio Gironde, in the Flores district of Buenos Aires, Corujeira settled in Madrid to coincide with his participation in an exhibition held in 1991 at the Reina Sofía Museum, entitled The School of the South, which was devoted to recapitulating the trail left by Joaquín Torres-García in later art. In fact, the paintings of Corujeira at that time, although always and until today very nuanced, very fine, contained a kind of lyrical geometry, almost evanescent, from which other American traces were not far away, for example the one that had left in him the way of doing the exquisite Argentine painter Alfredo Hlito.

But the space-Corujeira, so to speak, would serve since then as a seat to many other evocations, to many other echoes that were enriching and complicating the density of his ways, which paradoxically were becoming simpler. Recognizing the genealogy of Klee or Matisse in those paintings does not have much merit. But the fact is that the space itself went, little by little, emptying, uninhabiting, as if the compositions, to understand us, of lines and enclosures had left room for something more like the rhythms of a movement. It is this rhythmic consistency, this search for a standardized arrangement of forms in space, which can serve as a sign that sounds or voices will have in time, which makes concrete Alejandro Corujeira's closeness to poetry and prefigures his condition as a painter-poet, much more, in my opinion, than that of any other. Because Corujeira is not only a great reader of poets (he has discovered many of them to me, which I have later made my own with gratitude). But that is not it. And neither is it that the titles of his works are what is called "poetic". It is rather that exploration of the spaces of painting in which the temporal pattern proper to music or poetry has been slightly inscribed or noted.

In a poem of Corujeira's preference, Roberto Malatesta evoked the works necessary for the cultivation of a medlar tree, with which "It is not a matter of tearing without care / it is a matter of taking care of the height of the medlar tree; / it is a matter of respecting the agreement / with those elements that are faithful to it / ...". And we will soon recognize, especially in certain paintings from 2009 or 2010 such as *Aire de Oriente* or *Un jardín para Agnes* (homage to Agnes Martin), the inflorescences or blossoms or ribs typical of those natural rhythms that have marked plant growth with its own order.

By the time of these works, Corujeira had already held exhibitions in museums in Spain and America, worked with the Marlborough Gallery and visited well-known international centres. And just then, when this boom that we would call professional was confirmed, it is as if the painter had felt called by a kind of silence, by the silence of the written signs. Later series, to which works such as *Alegría* or, precisely, *Cuadernos del viento* belong, consisted in fact of a sort of naked spaces in which they gravitated with their own bodies.