

Idea and process. A text of Óscar Alonso Molina for the Dictionary of andalusian artists. Seville. 2011

Juan Carlos Bracho began his solo career after the break-up in 2002 of the artistic partnership he had formed with Julia Rivera since their days at university. In only a very few years, he has come to stand out among those of his generation both in critical recognition (first prize at the *Purificación García* and *Generaciones* competitions, both in 2005, and *Iniciarte Prize 2007*, among other relevant features of his cv) and regarding the expectations caused by his production. Over the last three years, rather than visibility, one should almost speak of a permanent presence in the specialized medium of these projects, which has led him to be considered one of today's obligatory reference points when describing the generation of current artists. However, Bracho still maintains the same cautions, persevering, somewhat distant and very firm attitude as in the early years concerning the public dimension of his work, giving each piece the tempo required by its character, no matter how extended this may be or how detailed an execution it may demand. In this sense, he has neither relaxed nor altered in the least his degrees of self-demand, intensity and constancy in these recent years of growing reputation and growing demand for his presence in collective exhibitions, biennales and fairs. Proof of this is, on the one hand, the enormous coherence running through his entire discourse to date; on the other, the convincing nature of his proposals, that scarcely suffer any important differences as regards processual quality, no matter how heterogeneous the means are to confront them.

One of the constants in his production is the preeminence of drawing as a conceptual space creating ideas. His private notebooks, which he refuses to exhibit or have reproduced, accumulate sketches and drafts, notes or press cuttings, leaflets from the exhibitions he visits, as well as any other material of contemporary visual entropy that, for some particular reason, attracts his attention. As a whole, they operate as "logbooks" of a particular alliance between biography and aesthetic reflection. From these notebooks down to the formal completion of most of his pieces, which we can basically understand as more or less orthodox derivatives of the same ancient discipline, Bracho reveals the essence of drawing concepts in contemporary diction: the preeminence of the idea, then, which in his hands tends to incarnate a fragile but extensive corporality, monotonous or discreet in appearance, but charged with nuances and great potential, just as the theorists of late mannerism dictated in the case of *disegno interno*.

Indeed, Bracho continually combines dynamic equilibria that give his work an intrinsic flexibility, where rigidity or monotony might be foreseen. Perhaps the most surprising of these is the result of the strongly processual character of his proposals ( which he likes to have referring to each other over and again, as if appeasing fictitious progress through infinitely open flight by confronting two mirrors), and what we might call a romantic substractum centred on the intellectualized experience of the landscape. The result involves a lucid, highly suggestive viewpoint from conceptual media on whole portions of our great cultural legacy, to which he is seen to be especially sensitive.

Bracho thus dialogues with a whole constellations of names from past and present, bringing up to date for us with as much originality as precision profound keys to the art of all time that turn us into a community of shared aesthetic interests: from Soll LeWitt to ornamental art and decorative painting (grutesque, marbleized, intarsia, stencil, that substratum recently dealt with by Didi-Huberman); From Agnes Martin to the old traditions of tapestry and embroidery; from Friedrich and his metahistorical projection in American abstract expressionism to the mural interventions of the young Portuguese artist Martinha Maia, etcetera