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UNTDELEMN

CHIRIVELLA SORIANO FOUNDATION

When Rebeca told me the title she had chosen for this exhibition, it seemed very fitting to me: "Untdelemn." Not only because of the sound of the term, but also because of the meaning it encapsulates. The word "Untdelemn" comes from ancient Romanian, but its etymological origin dates back to Hebrew and refers to the most exquisite oil; first pressed. So precious, that in certain rituals of Judaism or Christianity it is used as sacramental and purification oil. Thus, within the framework of this exhibition, "Untdelemn" takes on a spiritual meaning, as it becomes a metaphor for the act of "painting from the soul". Painting emerges as a spiritual balm capable of calming and healing, also acquiring a literal sense, as it is the oil, the balm that for Rebeca Plana, activates the nervous system.

Already the title of the exhibition offers us clues about its content: it is a very personal project that introduces us to Rebeca's spiritual universe. The artist is currently at a moment of biological and mental maturity, which she has reached after overcoming a difficult personal situation. She herself likes to use the metaphor of the phoenix bird because, like this mythological being, she has risen from her ashes much stronger and renewed and she finds, as she points out, peace with herself. This exhibition brings together around 60 works, mostly created in recent months and specifically for this project, reflecting this vital stage that the artist is going through. It might seem at first glance that the works are randomly arranged, when in fact there is a cohesive narrative that speaks to the artist herself, her emotional state, and her personal interests. As we will see later, there are many elements that refer to her personal life.

Despite not finding any figurative element in her work, Rebeca's painting is full of content. When facing an empty canvas, she rarely has a preconceived idea, allowing her feelings to guide the strokes and stains and capture that vital impulse. Rebeca finds in her daily life the creative stimuli that she captures through the brush - or any tool at hand -. Sometimes, these stimuli are deep feelings, they simply reflect her mood or the impression that a place, a person, or an everyday activity causes her. Music also plays a crucial role in her creative process; she defines herself as a great music lover and many of her paintings echo this. The long hours she spends in the studio, accompanied by her Labrador Pollock, are done to the rhythm of Jazz, Spanish Rock from the 80s, or, as a good Valencian, music from the Ruta del Bacalao. In "Untdelemn" in particular, the notes of Franco Battiato's music resonate in her paintings, with songs like "Nomads" and "The Era of the White Boar," with which she feels deeply identified and which even lend their title to some of the series presented. The same happens with literature; not in vain "The soul is in Ithaca," -which is for her the most significant painting of the entire exhibition- is based on the poem written by the Greek Konstantinos Kavafis in 1911. This poem encapsulates, essentially, her perception of life, her own journey to Ithaca that symbolizes, as it could not be otherwise, painting.

The history of art and art itself, is postulated as another of the main themes in Rebeca's work. For this reason, in this exhibition, David Nash, considered a leading artist in the discipline of Land Art, acquires a special prominence, not only in physical presence, also by allusions. We have said that Rebeca uses painting as a

tool to express, among other things, her sensations. So, what feeling does she get when she comes across David Nash's work? Rebeca has always felt a great admiration for round sculpture, but also, thanks to the influence of a carpenter father, she greatly values how the sculptor is able to infuse soul into a simple piece of wood. With all this, Rebeca has created a series of works on canvas and paper, with her particular aesthetic based on energetic and dynamic strokes, which result in a style opposed to that of the English sculptor and yet manages to achieve the perfect harmony between the two creators.

In addition to its conceptual content, "Untdelemn" stands out in the purely formal plane, as it reveals an abrupt evolution compared to her almost immediately previous work. The result is a much more refined abstraction, with subtler strokes and brushstrokes of color and a reduced palette. This change is evidenced when comparing her most recent works, such as "Nomads", with the oldest painting in the exhibition, "Landscape", made in 2021, which presents a much more baroque style. However, despite having gained in refinement and simplicity, not a bit of the essence of the artist has been lost, that which makes her so recognizable. Strokes, stains, stripes, splashes, or dripping stand out as distinctive expressive resources, which she applies in a very particular way, combining on the one hand the premeditation about the idea she wants to convey, together with the improvisation when applying the paint. A type of execution that reminds, to some extent, of those Zen painters who had such an influence on the development of American gestural painting in the 1950s and who, as is well known, managed to fuse body, mind, and spirit in painting. In line also with Zen philosophy, the exhibition reflects a trend towards the essential and simplification, even in the media used. Rebeca avoids the extravagant, using only paper and linen fabric and leaving aside other elements such as mattresses, metals, or refrigerator doors, which are already part of the past.

Furthermore, the temporal coincidence of this exhibition with the tenth anniversary of the individual exhibition "Top Control", also promoted by the Consorci de Museus de la Comunitat Valenciana and which marked a milestone in the artist's career, adds a special meaning to "Untdelemn". Throughout these ten years, Rebeca has participated in numerous exhibitions, but undoubtedly, as a curator I would highlight "Begin the Beguine," a project that we carried out in 2020 in the space of the Álvaro Alcázar gallery in Madrid and that finds continuity in this exhibition. In my opinion, "Untdelemn" represents a turning point in Rebeca's journey, a crucial moment in her longing to reach Ithaca.

Finally, we can only thank Mr. Manuel Chirivella for his tireless commitment to promoting Valencian art and his generosity in providing us with this unique space. The Palau Joan de Valeiona, one of the few examples of Valencian civil Gothic architecture, stands as the perfect setting to host these works. Furthermore, as proclaimed in its inaugural motto in 2005, it is a "palace without doors," open to the public and artists and where, according to the artist's own words, she feels at home. Likewise, we want to express our gratitude to the Consorci de Museus, dependent on the Valencian Community, for its continuous commitment to promoting contemporary art by Valencian artists and for once again betting on Rebeca on this occasion. Also to the entire work team, to Rafael Tejedor from the Foundation, to Isabel Pérez from the Consortium, and to Carmen Fernández-Daza, from the gallery, without whom it would not have been possible. This exhibition not only offers a deep look at Rebeca's work but also highlights the importance of her work in the contemporary artistic panorama. From its enigmatic title to the distribution of the works, every aspect of this exhibition immerses us in the artist's spiritual and emotional universe. Rebeca Plana invites us on an intimate journey through her life, her emotions, and her inspirations, revealing an artistic evolution marked by maturity and personal overcoming.