

Beatriz Ezban: Inner Landscapes

by Raquel Tibol

After nine decades of development, the spring of new proposals and new options has not yet concluded in abstract art. Individual feelings, attitudes and meditation, have been giving a vigor that has more to do with renewal than with continuity. In contrast to the abstractions derived from cubism, more linked to the rational and the precise, those which have intuitiveness as a far ascendant, have interiorized nature and landscape so as to reach the symbols and signs of representation that do not conform evident themes, through illusory processes of lyric exaltation. This is possible because as Francis Bacon said, "nature often stays hidden". This is where the painter Beatriz Ezban decided to enter, to those enigmatic zones, hardly accessible and fugitive. She was born in Mexico City, awarded in August 2002 with one of the acquisition prizes of Rufino Tamayo's XI Biennial Painting for her painting *Babel* (oil and wax on cotton:

200 x 170 cm, 79' x 67'), and is represented in the Abstract Art Museum Manuel Felguérez with the oil painting *El rey y la reina, 1999*, (King and Queen).

After studying four semesters in the School of Philosophy and Literature at the UNAM (1975-1976), Beatriz Ezban understood that visual arts were her own business and she went for a short period to Los Angeles, California, to study Drawing and Visual Thinking at UCLA. She came back and enrolled at the National School of Visual Arts (1977-1979). She understood that she needed a non orthodox inciter teacher and she frequented the Gilberto Aceves Navarro's workshop (1978-1980).

To broaden her horizons and experiences, she has traveled to New York, Paris, Holland, Spain, Iceland, Norway, Ireland, England, Canada and Italy. In 1997, she attended the natural fibers tri-dimensional workshop, in the ENAP and in 1999 she studied virtual art in third dimension.

Through her persistent devotion, Beatriz Ezban has constantly and systematically searched the confrontation and consequently, between the years of 1975 and 2002, has participated in eighty-two group shows in Mexico, Argentina, Hong Kong, etc., and has presented more than 30 solo exhibitions in Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Canada, Spain, and the United States. The last one took place at the Landucci Art Gallery, in Mexico City, by the end of 2002.

The titles of most of those exhibitions have defined both the character of the work as well as the author's moods: *El retorno* (The Return), *Huelga nacional de ermitaños* (Hermits' National Strike), *Pincel solo* (Paint-brush Solo), *Prohibido soñar* (Forbidden to Dream), *Del cielo a la tierra* (From Heaven to Earth), *Otro* (Other), *Eras hecha de trigo* (Made out of Wheat), *De hábitos imprudentes* (Imprudent Habits), *Bajo la influencia del paisaje islandés* (Icelandic Nature), *Retorno a Islandia* (Back to Iceland), *El cuerpo del color* (The Body of Color), *El retorno de los ermitaños urbanos* (Urban Hermits), *La mística del paisaje abstracto* (Mystic of Abstract Landscape), *Shoot!* (Disparo), *Homenaje a Umberto Eco* (Homage to Umberto Eco), *Corteza* (Cores), *Disoluciones* (Di-solutions) and *Vértigos* (Vertigos).

Light, imagined as energy in movement, dances with flash shines. The dark tones spread out on canvas printed in whites; the grays in different tonalities are those that share the visible protagonism of the plastic fact, and at the same time, they nullify any white monotony without soothing a dynamic that in almost every piece produces non argumentative sensations. A dance is produced thanks to the energetic rhythm, as the plastic material was applied in vertical, curved segments, diagonal and crossing strokes. There are organic expansions, stormy strengths that produce spiral strokes, revealing sinuosity of tensions between what is ending and what is beginning, flaming whirlpools that arise from a subconscious mind.

The lightning effects acquire a bigger contrast and intensity when they come from abysses or thicknesses. Soul landscapes with no connection to any reality, whimsical, intuitive, essential and thrilling. Passion and imagination melt in exaltations that reveal a sensibility with romantic propensity.

In the white series, Ezban has let her fantasy flow in more defined forms, bodiless too, but organic. Formal designs of traces, falls, processions, emptiness, light knots, shelters, gleams, dark displacement, invented just to symbolize moods, in an aesthetic impulse similar to the abstract Surrealists when they trusted their topographic and expressive automatisms. Here the tools to extend the plastic material have been used at different rhythms. There are less waves, diagonal strokes are smooth, there are almost no crossings, light is more equal, lineal strokes are more representative, especially when concentrated. In the paintings of the Vertigos' series, we feel cosmic metaphoric pulsations, heterogeneous contents, melancholy charges surely produced by the indetermination of appearances. A system is planned to space out the nature, without disdaining it, rescuing its transcendent properties in an act of non temporal reflection.

Beatriz Ezban, along her aesthetic exercise, learned that plastic combinations are endless, and that this multiplicity is enriched when the artist does not look for an habitual logic nor obeys brief modalities.

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