

Notes on *Los días*, by Joaquín Boz*

By Verónica Flom

There is a phenomenon that science still has not been able to explain called crown shyness. Certain species of trees' branches grow close but never graze each other. As if they could communicate, each tree establishes the margins of its own space, its own territory. Far from subscribing to these theories, I always believed this phenomenon to be the opposite of shyness, as if, when deciding not to get close, each and every one of the crowns that make up that foliage gained strength, forged an identity, or rather claimed its own space. I find that same strength in the blurry and semi-isolated figures that constitute the great paintings by Joaquín Boz.

The overall strength, I think, is in the components that fill every wood panel, so vigorously that they obscure the composition and appear to be the product of some blind force. Before his work, one gets the impression of being inside a prehistoric cavern, right in front of a cave painting created directly on stone, prior to the invention of paintbrushes. The telluric palette spots the panel, as earth soiling a boy's t-shirt. It feels like going back to the infancy of humankind, to the exact moment in which we suppose the *Homo sapiens* maintained a direct and immediate contact with nature, before its domination. It is also an infancy of the forms, since the elements (sometimes stains, sometimes ink whirls, sometimes dark clouds) seem to be seeking their definitive form, as if they moved between abstraction to figuration or towards an unknown state.

In the best case, even if we do not assign them a precise referent, these isolated images become significant to us, as cave paintings were significant and perhaps magical for ancient men, or as a broom may turn into a unique creature, be it endearing or terrifying, in the eyes of a good hypnotist's victim. We perceive the latent force they possess before it becomes evident. Nothing is clear in these paintings. Perhaps the main interest in Boz's work is to explore the power that nests within blurriness, roughness, nebulosity; within the larva that still fights to find its shape. This evolutive condition is highlighted by the artist in some works on paper, which he soaks in flaxseed oil to let an unpredicted drawing arise by chance. Plants move towards the sun to turn light into energy-with that the same deliberate slowness- the oil flows over the paper.

It is difficult to know if the elegant and balanced display of colors and shapes is due to premeditated decisions, like those made by someone walking on thin ice, or if, on the contrary, it is a complete accident, from abrupt impulses in front of the painting. It is precisely in this struggle between control and accident, between bounds and freedom, where the precision of his work lies, as exact as a tailored suit.

What separates one day from the next? The answer might be immediate, twenty-four hours. But one can intuit that only milliseconds distinguish the end of a day and the beginning of the next one. Certainly, one cannot describe the passage of time without using days as units of measurement. There is a distance that separates each unit of measurement understood as a day. It is probably in that distance, just as subtle as the one between trees that do not touch out of shyness, where singularity lies: even if they appear similar, there will never be one identical to the other.

* Translation by Fabrizio Arias Lippo

LOS DÍAS

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