



SOFÍA DOURRÓN

Caudal

“... things are over there, silent, and one too approaches them silently. And from that relation, from that contact, a very mysterious one, of course, but also very humble of us, a resolution arises...”

That is what Juan L. Ortiz said in 1978. He was talking to a journalist about the possibility of going beyond the distressing solitude we feel towards things: rivers, mountains, trees, roads, teacups, spoons, chairs... every single thing. Juanele also mentioned, in the same interview, that that type of solitude emerges from our inability to join them, the things, and from our habit of withdrawing into ourselves. He finally said that sometimes this “resolution” which appeases us happens in things like art and, we assume, almost without us knowing.

What happens, in part, is that we are used to treating things as static entities, closed in on themselves and, above all, lacking volition of their own, subject to our actions or thoughts. And since paintings are things—even if they are a particular type of thing—we also inevitably think of them as stable and objective matter. In Joaquín’s paintings something different happens: matter starts dictating its own path, so that he can later

follow it, take care of it, patiently arrange it, alter it with a brush or with his finger, find a yellow pushing from among the greens and the pinks to help it get out. Over time, matter moves again, it tightens and relaxes, it cracks, it evaporates. In that relation of exchange and transformation, a movement leading towards mutual recognition begins, and, maybe, even a possible resolution to solitude.

Caudal brings us closer to that experience of things as a continuous flow of matter. Here, as in Joaquín’s paintings, everything gets intertwined, and in that intertwining the outlines, once rigid and finished, get soft and porous; in the overlap of small gestures, shapes and colors which become dirty with one another and almost unrecognizable, the references to the world around us and its principle of difference fade. Here, among layers of paint, people, surrounding walls and hanging papers like Japanese shades from the Pampas, all things, both human and non-human, meet once again, now mixed-up as the flow of a river. And as in the river, we seek to detach from our known shape and merge, slowly, together, at least for a while, into a moist, soft and somewhat sticky mass.

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JOAQUÍN BOZ *Caudal*
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