

# The secret work of Joan Furriols

Joan Furriols had to work in a hardware store, following the family tradition, because the world of art rejected him without contemplations. Half life dedicated to the store in Vic's Plaça Major is an eternity. Half life means 40 of its almost 80 years. It is not a unique case of outsider, but it has a particularity: except of a parenthesis of fifteen years, he never stopped creating, always in the most radical loneliness, on the margins of everything and everyone. Every day he closed the store, had dinner and closed inside his workshop, inside his inner world, inside each one of his works. In such a hostile environment, he protected himself and took refuge in his privacy.



Joan Furriols in El Quadern Robot (Còrsega, 267). The exhibition '17 obres sense títol' can be seen until October 1 QUIM PUIG

Furriols is an affable man, rather timid, with a silent voice that, from time to time, spits up a smile of malicious ingenuity. He does not feel any grudges, but his work make us notice that he has suffered. A secret work that began to be visible in 2007, first in his city and after at the Tecla Sala Art Center in Hospitalet de Llobregat and in the Montserrat Museum. Even so, it remains unknown; very few gallerists trust in his work, of an extreme sensitivity but difficult, complex and not very commercial. It has not been ignored by Anna Belsa, who a few years ago claimed it as a luminous presence of post-war art in the Joan Prats-Artgràfic gallery, and has exhibited in her own gallery: **el quadern robot**.

In this exhibition, the recent work -some pieces are from this year year: Furriols is, without any doubt, in a moment of vigorous creativity- is shown side by side to pieces from 40 years ago, that legitimize the honesty of an artist who inspite deceptions never gave up and remained faithful to his idea of art, without sweetening it. An artist who, logically, had aspirations when he was very young and settled in Barcelona in search of opportunities. Furriols was the youngest of the group of creators (Tàpies and company) that opened cracks

of modernity in the cultural desert of the fifties. This difference of age with the new totems of the Catalan avant-garde did not help him. He himself recognizes that they didn't take him seriously. However, he did the same as them all: attended with enthusiasm the talks in the Maillol Circle, in the French Institute, the only space of resistance in the heavy conservative environment. Meanwhile he was praying for a scholarship to travel to Paris. Josep Maria de Sucre told him many times that he would get it. But the scholarship never arrived, and, disappointed, he returned to Vic.

But he knew very well how to revert his frustrations and his worries in a work that nourished of the things that were close to him. After all, the only thing he had was his hardware store. Furriols turned the daily routine and the discouragement caused by the incomprehension, in artistic matter. First with iron plates that he attacked with holes to purge pains and anguish. Then the volume entered in the scene. The small and modest utensils, from a screw to a funnel, which he sold during the day in the store, was mutated at night in the workshop in an artifact at the service of his thoughts and feelings.

Furriols has continued to follow the same artistic path. Of course, lately with a certain liberation because finally he has been considered an artist. Gravity has decreased in new works in which iron is present without being. The artist pigments and models fragile foams in such a way that the eye is deceived and the observer thinks he is looking at a consistent



metal. Furriols, who has spent his life collecting objects, dealing with ragpickers and peddlers, has also entered the recycling phase himself. At the entrance of the quadern robot we find a work that he created in 2012 with some nails that had served him in his workshop to hold his tools. Concerned

that his grandchildren were playing nearby and could be hurt, he decided to invalidate the spikes with cork stoppers that he painted in colors. This work says a lot about an artist who, without making any noise, because nobody allowed him to, has sought truth and beauty in the most insignificant things. ✨

more info: <https://elquadernrobot.com/en/exhibitions/joan-furriols-june-2016/>