



One of Joan Furriols' works exhibited in the El Quadern Robat gallery.

ART

Whispering

Josep Casamartina i Parassols

The informal Italian abstraction of the fifties exerted an enormous influence on Catalan and Spanish art of the time, much more than American abstract expressionism, except in the cases of Esteban Vicente and Juan Guerrero, because then they lived in New York and had integrated. The intense imprint of Lucio Fontana, Piero Manzoni or Alberto Burri is found in different ways in the immediately subsequent works of Antoni Tàpies, Romà Vallès, Joan Vilacasas or Enric Panadurà -when he left the geometric abstraction, the early sixties- and also in some members of the El Paso group from Madrid, such as Manolo Millares, Luis Feito, Manuel Rivera or the tangential Lucio Muñoz. The Italians brought an aesthetic sense and a taste refined by the textures very different from the energetic gesture and blunt chromatism of the Americans, and their work connected very well

with the southern sensibility, although some (Millares, Feito or Rivera) would add drama, and others (Tàpies) a ruled impulse of transcendence.

Joan Furriols (Vic, 1937) belongs to a second informalist generation that links, nevertheless, with members of the first one, because some of them started late to do abstraction, like Josep Guinovart or Albert Ràfols Casamada. The early works of Furriols, however, those of the late fifties, are already immersed in abstraction, because then the informal was consolidating quickly and was more accessible to enroll without having to suffer the great dilemma of choosing between figuration or abstraction, as his predecessors had suffered. However, the recalcitrant academic world still reigned and it would take many years to accept modernity.

In **el quadern robot**, the gallery that, by the hand of Anna Belsa, has inherited the most open line of the reconstituted Artgràfic of the Joan Prats, there are two of these initial works by Furriols, in the small retrospective dedicated to the painter, sculptor and assemblajista de Vic. Works and space fit together perfectly, everything seems tailor made. 17 works without title, name of the exhibition, is a circular trip in the world of Furriols. It begins with a wood and a perforated iron, in the manner of Burri and Fontana, in which an aesthetic game is established between the distribution of the holes and the drawing and texture of the materials, left as is, without patina, varnish nor painting, looking good. Afterwards, however, although the formal part unfolds in a harmonious and very coherent way, the materials will leave reality to become gradually appearance through the makeup of the painting, in an ellipsis that regains continuity from the nineties. In the end, the cardboard becomes metal, and sponges and plastic, stone, in an ironic game of the artist on himself. First everything was what it was and then nothing will be what it seems, but visually everything remains the same. Italianism continues in Furriols, and its sponge stones, of soft and studied chromaticism, refer to the soft and remote forms of the still lifes of Giorgio Morandi. He also plans in the exposed showcase boxes (the best of the choice) the poetic discretion of Joseph Cornell, but without any symbolic reference, beyond the cosmic mysticism that gray and monochrome objects can give off of vibrant pecking.

JOAN FURRIOLS, 17 OBRES

SENSEN TÍTOL

EL QUADERN ROBAT
Còrsega 267, Barcelona
Until Friday

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