

Beatriz Simón; A Return Within

By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.

Confucius

Painting a work can be good, acknowledgeable even. Sustaining it, being on a consistent trend with oneself is what separates chance from talent, apprentice from master.

Beatriz Simon, a Mexican artist having exhibited in the United States, as in Europe and Hong Kong, works with an interest of self fulfilment, of one's self search, introducing at the same time her very personal mix of techniques and mediums.

Beatriz Simon works with different mediums in order to build her creations and strengthen her search. Generally, she has trained as a painter. She has now expanded to include different mediums such as everyday objects transformed into sculptures, photography, plaster sculptures, performances, videos and graphic design. Beginning in 1992 to take flight by herself, she started to separate from artistic standards.

Simon declares to us : "Stop and amaze yourself by who you really are and by what surrounds you". This of course introduces the idea that you introspect into yourself, but also that you accept who you are, imperfections building humanly perfection. A certain interest for the influence of the surroundings onto one self is apparent in her work. Imaginary perfection created by society through expectations and myths is not something to look up to. All that quest for social acceptance has alienated the human being from real preoccupations such as basic interpersonal relations like family and friends and has oriented it towards himself and it's own personal achievement in the eyes of others. Simon seeks to create a detachment from these alienating beliefs.

Her works, per se, invite to multiple interpretations, as abstraction usually does. Nevertheless, the presence of humans in it, give a clue to a general preoccupation of the artist. Simon, despite her visual and literary abstractions, give us a thread to follow by her somewhat elusive figurations. Elusive, yet clear. Her figurations are not buildings. They are not cars. They are not washing machines and vacuum cleaners. They are people. They are people together or alone, thus isolating the idea of human relations and of inner-self

quest. Her movements do not relate to screeching tires on the floor. Her technique is not the one of a machine, repeating incessantly the same thing. They are human expressions, proofs of human presence, hands, dripping, handwriting, imperfection, scratching, improvisation. All telling that a person with feelings and thoughts did it. The materials used by her, though some of them might appear industry built, are there to make references to the act of constructing. How you build something, the processes required, a metaphor as to how a person builds himself too.

Her works themselves are constructed on the basis of the complementarity just as the human being is constituted of various elements. She will mix mediums, layers and expressive powers in order to create works that are made of very different things that extracted one from another would not have the same sense of fullness and finish as the whole thing together. The elements used by her also represent her drive for human construction. For instance, her "mescal" (a type of mexican textile) bags go through a particular process. It lays for ten days in the sun in order to extract the best part of it. The inside becomes the outside. Humans can also introspect and take the best from the inside in order to ameliorate the outside.

A recurrent symbol in her works is that of creating life by the act of reborn. Mothers with her arms crossed as though carrying a baby; Paintings of developing up- to- come new borns in wombs. It makes a reference as well to the importance of this act itself, the one of becoming a parent. The act of nurturing, caring and protecting another human being, not out of interest or pride but of simple human genetic, it is a human and beautiful thing. An act that no exterior influence can take out of us. That is to be basically human, a true aspect of ourselves, the act of caring for one another. Circles are also part of her perennial aesthetical figurations. A figure that allows liberty, numerous possibilities and which does not corner itself with precise angles, a symbol of union and of infinity. It is a radiant and energizing form, vibrant with energy because of the direct relation to the sun and its associated qualities. Present in her photographs, paintings and sculptures it shows the importance this symbol has for Beatriz Simon as something revitalizing, in constant movement, change and self-adaptation. As a movement itself, it is also very free and human, full of energy. The circle is, just as Simon's point of views of humans, perfect in its imperfection. Even if the artist's hand does not draw it as a compass, it still keeps its figurational strength and is thus not undiminished as other

figures would. The circle is also the symbol of a womb, a cherished subject by the artist.

A recent and one of her most intriguing works is a shelf. A work destined to make a metaphor to the human mind. Opened and closed compartments parallel to used and forgotten memories by people. The negation and refusal of any of those drawers with what they contain is a refusal of self because they constitute that person. No matter the past, it is part of one, endlessly modifying and influencing the person.

Embrace yourself and everything that constitutes you, because no matter what, it is you. That is what Beatriz Simon's works are supposed to and effectively create in people. You are made of various elements from which you can gain experience and personality. Accept it. Rebuild it. Re-flourish it. And enjoy it. Can't we, as Lennon might say, "Let It Be" or; let yourself be yourself.

Etienne Bolze, 2010