

Galería Ehrhardt Flórez

Kiko Pérez
El roce

From November 19th 2022 to January 14th 2023

El roce (Rubbing) is the title of Kiko Pérez's fourth solo exhibition at Ehrhardt Florez Gallery. The various associations surrounding this term give us a clue as to what the exhibition offers: the action or effect of rubbing or being rubbed upon; the signs or marks left on something after having rubbed against something else. It is perhaps an allusion to frequent dealings with certain people, and could provoke a small discussion or confrontation.

Through his practice, the work of Kiko Pérez reflects on the processes of production, the artistic object within the logic of capital, and the repetitive and continuous results of artistic work. While his work has maintained certain guidelines and recurrent motifs with respect to the methods and modes of his practice, the making, the sense of craft, and the material and manual production of sculptural artefacts and pictorial objects on paper or wood have also long characterised the artist's research.

El roce presents several recent wood-on-wood paintings (all dated from 2022), a small earlier series of work on paper (made in 2010 and shown for the first time in this exhibition), and an unpublished graphic animation in video that also belongs to a series of older works (2018).

Previous themes on which Kiko Pérez's work has been based are still present now: consumer society, production methods, mass culture, shop windows or advertisements; but also domestic and urban furniture, the idea of style (or lack of it), a sense of humour, and the visual and sonic world of a generation born in the eighties that created part of its life-long identity in the nineties.

Until now we could establish or situate the work of Kiko Pérez in two more or less separate universes that run in parallel. Yet *El roce* represents a turning point from which these tendencies intertwine in a much more natural way. Until recently we could distinguish a certain division: a practice in relation to a more or less orthodox geometry (often contaminated by accidents or fissures that removed it from the supposed geometry), and an organicity that is very present in his more recent paintings and sculptures, and which demonstrated his interest in the body, fetishism, craftsmanship, polished workmanship, softness, and sexuality. These issues that were subjected to different treatments are now articulated within the same set of works, with the rubbing between them imposing a new material logic.

The refined and tactile work carried out from a purely sculptural perspective, with slow and laborious workmanship and soft and voluptuous textures and patinas, is now linked to the pictorial production, both that which is somewhat less integral and hygienic in terms of its geometry, and another more recent set of production in which geometric precepts are twisted and anatomical forms grow in relation to themes that are much more bucolic than the urban themes that had earlier concerned him.

Both thematically and formally (if there can be a distinction between them), the new work of Kiko Pérez is materially linked to the idea of craft, enjoyment and pleasure in making with the hands, and is partially formulated from eclecticism. In the new work we find the local and the exotic, the romantic and the humorous, sarcasm and beauty; in terms of form, there is gesture and geometric purism, draughtsmanship and craftsmanship, lyricism and a certain acceptance of rawness. In the optical distortion which occurs between image and form, between the precise outline and the overflowing stain, between the layers, the sunken hollows and the rubbed contours, there are fences, gradients, annotations, marks and rubbings from the process that, although they could be glimpsed in previous works, now constitute in themselves the formal operations that structure the works. The surface of the painting, the epidermis that receives the rubbing, is scrubbed and scoured; indeed, there is a lot of cleaning in this series of works, which are composed according to the arrangement of cut, superimposed and excavated pieces of wood, and the incisions created through certain pictorial automatisms in a sort of cartographic representation of islands or coastal features, or, attending to much more mundane matters, of stains on the ground, of trodden chewing gum or of random shapes the artist finds, as Peio Aguirre would say, 'not as ornament but as materiality of form'.

From the modern movement and Hans Richter to the streets of Vigo and Battiato's 'Balinesi nei giorni di festa'; from Bauhaus to industrial design; from furniture to the handles of fronton paddles. In the Barthesian sense, Kiko Pérez configures his work and a whole material culture not on the field of ideas, but on the field of forms.