

Galería Ehrhardt Flórez

June Crespo
SOLAR

From March 6th to May 10th 2025

On 15 May 2023, June Crespo wrote in her diary:

"Up a ladder, I examine the openings in the mould with the rebar going in. I look in as deep as I can. Light enters slightly in a part lower down. The thinner walls of plaster translate the negative space that was previously between the bodies. They have organic edges. It reminds me of an internal vision of a mould I made years ago. On that occasion, the empty space between the legs and hips of a mannequin looked like an architectural space."

This is an entry from June Crespo's 'Vascular Diary' that, while not fully explaining this exhibition, does constitute an essay on the particularities of June Crespo's creative universe. While writing a diary was not a common practice in her work, on the occasion of her exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao last year, a series of notes, organised chronologically, were published in the book accompanying the exhibition, giving evidence of the process of its preparation. There are repeated allusions to the physical, the sensorial and the personal, as well as to technical and material processes. References to other works, other artists and other exhibitions generate an accumulation of images that the artist approaches as a flow that directly permeates her own language. Reflections on sculpture, scale, distance, the gaze and touch occupy the same space in her artistic imagination as other more intimate episodes. A small selection of images that are also included in the book of her aforementioned exhibition 'Vascular', they present a landscape that covers her most immediate contexts (Elena Aitzkoa, Lucía C. Pino, Julia Spínola, Claudia Rebeca Lorenzo, David Bestué) and other more symbolic places of contemporary sculpture (Isa Genzken, Bruce Nauman or Doris Salcedo, to name but a few), which form part of the routes and readings in June Crespo's gaze and recapitulations.

For her second solo exhibition at Galería Ehrhardt Flórez, under the title SOLAR, June Crespo proposes a place of encounter or coexistence of works of a diverse nature, where all hierarchy loses meaning.

The exhibition addresses recurring motifs in June Crespo's most recent practice, proposing a transformative voicing of concepts that in one way or another have marked Basque art and international sculpture in recent years. As the curator Manuel Cirauqui has pointed out on occasion, if Basque sculpture is based on certain issues that are present in the territory itself, both its industrial past, its mythologies and its social struggles, which are undoubtedly interwoven in the political and economic industrial fabric, June Crespo, having grown up with that territory, is also the bearer of these debates and a fundamental part of their vitality and validity. One of the starting points for this exhibition responds once again to the specific characteristics of the space, with the works articulating both the presences and vacancies within it. Crespo has worked with repetition, insistence and variation of patterns that appear new precisely because they are insistent. The industrially produced supports, the proliferation of plant, tubular and circular forms, and the morphology of flowers are living and present elements in her practice. The changing scale of a botanical element, the resizing of certain types of flower (in this exhibition the strelitzia and the iris in particular), form the backbone of her most recent production. For June Crespo, the flower is a motif to be traversed, an excuse, a form in transit which allows a displacement and a deviation in the initial form.

SOLAR speaks to us of a diurnal quality that tends towards an upright, expansive and affirmative posture. Anthropologist Gilbert Durand associates the diurnal regime with heroism and a certain polarisation. The passage of mammals to an upright posture could be understood as a heroic act that has been achieved, step by step, over millions of years of motor and anatomical adaptations.

The absence of the sun speaks to us of the nocturnal as a space where apparently opposing qualities are presented on the same plane. Durand associates the nocturnal regime with the cyclical, rhythmic and sexual. The qualities of the diurnal and nocturnal regime seem to be present in the sculptural work distributed in the different spaces of the gallery.

In the main room of the gallery, we find two free-standing concrete sculptures: dancing column (I) and dancing column (II).

These concrete sculptures are anchored in a simultaneous movement of suspension and gravitation. They seem to rest on the ground sturdily, even though they are padded and cushioned by the use of other materials that transpose the form of the sculptural mould, and modulate their originally industrial nature. This hard, stony drift thus incorporates an element of comfort, more vulnerable and mobile, which, either as a cushion or as a dismembered mattress, elevates the works and cushions their hieratic nature. What were once impenetrable surfaces, except for those fissures where textile garments such as tracksuits or mackintoshes marked bright spots of colour in the industrial material, are now proposed as places of intense permeability.

Industrial materials such as ventilation ducts and modified truck tarpaulins, or resin-soaked fibreglass fabric, form the wall pieces in both gallery spaces. These wall gestures are a continuation of the series Their weft, the grass (TW,TG), initiated in 2024 in space 1646 (The Hague). Holes that open up on the surface of the plastic sheet provide access to the interior of the pipes arranged transversally on the wall and allow the piece to be

traversed inside and out, in a two-way channel, which seems to pick up that gesture so characteristic of June Crespo's practice that Marc Navarro once defined as 'closed but broken form' and that here we could identify as entrance-and-exit or comings-and-goings. Both the free-standing sculptural pieces and the wall works thus propose currents of direction that transform the room into a space of circulation and movement.

The next room holds an installation with a certain parallelism in its composition, constituting the backdrop for two floating, ethereal metal and textile sculptures that each contain garments that have been squeezed together. With different supports and anchorages (ceiling-floor and wall), the sculptures dancing column (Iris) (I) and (II) configure the space in a conceptual and architectural manner very different from the main room.

The wall pieces in both spaces seem to radiate light and generate an atmosphere and a place for the free-standing or foreground pieces. They are held in a balance between tension and distension, between what is shown and hidden, between transparency and structural clarity, and the blurring of a membrane. What provides cover also allows elements to appear.

SOLAR points towards formal matters, but also in a poetic and sensorial direction, from which perception becomes the backbone of the exhibition. Circulating gazes are proposed: a more general one centred on volumes, surfaces and considerable masses; and another, more attentive to minimal details, transparencies, hidden pins, knots, hooks or tangled textiles.

A new morphological work debates the questions of the small and the large, and of the organic and vegetal versus the industrial. There are formulas, processes, fractures and ways of making that are now being developed in a new way, in other places and from other angles. Things that used to happen on the wall now happen on the floor, what was vertical suddenly takes on a horizontal form, what seemed hard becomes soft. At the same time SOLAR proposes the introduction of affective components which, as the artist herself has stated on occasion, are qualities that resonate with the musculoskeletal. As June Crespo says: 'moving forward by going back.'