

(ENG)

PERE LLOBERA FAULA RODONA. SOLS I EMBOGITS; ENTRE LA PRECISIÓ TOTAL I UNA CANÇÓ DE SAU

SOLO EXHIBITION

09.06.20 – 12.07.20

Let's say straight off that one of the most important paintings in this exhibition is not here. Imagine it: a small, magnetic painting in an ugly gallery dedicated to English art at the Louvre in Paris, titled *Titania Sleeping* whose maker, Richard Dadd, painted it in 1841 in the cell of a psychiatric hospital where he lived almost all of his life. On the canvas, in a painted frame, a strange smiling being accompanied by two bats watches over a bucolic scene containing a cave, the entrance of which is again framed by an arch of unsettling intertwined, musical and flowery creatures. Inside, the queen of the faeries slumbers as she is covered up, and a group of revellers dances away. This is the genesis of *Faula rodona. Sols i embogits; entre la precisió total i una cançó de Sau.* (Roundfable. Alone and Unbalanced; Between Total Precision and a Sow Song.) An entrance of entrances to enter this fractal woodland structure

where the frames and the arches, the caves and the chapels, the borders and the portals – literal and symbolic – repeat and concatenate. Welcome to the kingdom of artists!

The title sprang from a slip of the tongue, a mistake. "Faula" (fable) instead of "taula" (table). And Pere Llobera – like the great Gloria Fuertes who wrote "I think table and say chair. I buy bread and leave it. What I learn I forget. All this happens because I love you" ¹ – does not hide but avails himself of mistakes and shortcomings. That's because this exhibition has the firm intention of being a tribute to the disorganized. An ode to eccentric thinking to abscond from our limp reality. And it is round, the fable; circular and circulating, it concentrates and expands. It is, and I quote the artist, "a desire that does not yet have shape, a force skating on the mud, a sticky web that for four years has gone on adhering to what it sought

and what crashed there". A pile of readings, photographs like those of an action consisting of having painted a *plein air* painting in Montgat and the subsequent struggle against the sea making use of that very sea. Objects, like a perfumed gnome-stalagmite, Christmas lights provided by the town of Colldejou, and a beam the artist found in who knows what farmhouse where since the only clue he had was that it was mentioned in passing in a Casasses poem. Paintings, because Pere Llobera is above all a painter through and through, and he knows that creation is damp. To give you an idea of his power to legitimize disparate sources on canvas: one began in 1987 with the action of a guy named Miguelito, who, trying to flee in a stolen car, had an accident that



ended up as a sculpture since “reality sometimes evinces imagination”,ⁱⁱ says Llobera, quoting Klüge, and he wonders what would have happened if this had been repeated by two thieves in the same place at the same moment! Thus it is less a figurative painting than a hypothesis. He also leaps across the beginning of the alphabet in all caps to pay homage to lysergic Catalan surrealism, and in a large format work he set out to make a version of *The En[n]unciation* for the working class that has its roots in the large-scale failure of a contraceptive pill and with his biography. Documentaries like *Rock my Religion* by Dan Graham are here because he is a convert of this piece and because the creation of art, like the fable, is also to connect to everything and keep everything going, for the peripeteias not to stop. The most extraordinary of them, Calvino says, “narrate with only what is essential in mind; there is always a struggle against time, against the obstacles that prevent or delay the fulfilment of a wish or the recovery of a lost good.”ⁱⁱⁱ

All of this in an exhibition from a painter who seems made of odd kin along the lines of what ecologist and philosopher Donna Haraway calls for when he encourages us not so much to reproduce but to make strange families for the sake of all species and the end of the *Capitalistocene*. Human and non-human, organic and inorganic, animal and plant... Or did you not see the root on the wall and the scorpion jumping across the grass? Personal works and those from others, old and new, which have been invoked for their ability to amaze us. This is because according to the artist only the surprising will serve for confronting what Kertész said before he died: “Humanity has been metaphysically abandoned; such is its state of being now, and it is a dangerous state”.^{iv} Pániker would add palliatively: “By way of wonder the sacred lives”.^v

However, this densely populated and silent work holds one last mystery, which Lezama stated as follows: “a tree in the desert will always be less surprising than a man walking through the suburbs in the rain covering himself with a newspaper”.^{vi}

Mireia Sallarès

ⁱ Cascante, Jorge. *El libro de Gloria Fuertes*. Blackie Books, 2017.

ⁱⁱ Klüge, Alexander. *El hueco que deja el diablo*. Anagrama, 2007.

ⁱⁱⁱ Calvino, Italo. *De fábula. Biblioteca Italo Calvino*. Siruela, 1998.

^{iv} Kertész, Irma. *La última posada*. Acanalado, 2016.

^v Pániker, Salvador. *Cuaderno amarillo*. Random House, 2000.

^{vi} Lezama Lima, José. *La cantidad hechizada. Ensayos completos IV*. Confluencias, 2015.

PERE LLOBERA

Pere Llobera (Barcelona, 1970) combines his figurative and conceptual pictorial art practice with curating exhibitions and other forms of artistic collaboration.

His heterogeneous training ranges from an unfinished Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Universitat de Barcelona and studies in history and aesthetics of cinema in Valladolid in the 1990s to a residence at the prestigious Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten of Amsterdam in 2006 and 2007.

He has participated in numerous collective exhibitions at home and abroad. His recent solo shows include *At the cabinets* at the Voorlinden Museum in The Hague (2019) and *Acció* at the gallery Bombon Projects in Barcelona (2018).

In Barcelona he has collaborated with institutions like the MNAC (Espai educArt), the Fundació Miró (Do it yourself) and CaixaForum (Beneath the Arm: Between the Palm of the Hand and the Armpit), and he is currently the curator of the 2020-2021 programme at the Fundació Miró's Espai 13.