

HÉCTOR FRANK OR THE INFINITE SCALE

Paying regular visits to Héctor Frank's studio in Havana may become an exercise of disturbing optimism. Each time he has different things to show, and not because, untiring, he keeps adding pieces in different formats and dissimilar supports, but because the series or thematic collections follow one another vertiginously, and each new field demands from him new palette, compositional strategy and iconography—at least hitherto not known in his personal practice.

One may say that this artist does not reach plateaus in his ascent. He rather climbs steps of an infinite scale, like those trumpeters who reach such a high, clean and piercing note that they make us think that only the abyss lies beyond, and then, startle us again the following night with other wonders. If Héctor Frank were a musician, his main virtue would be the staccato he achieves in each piece; and his rhythm, like his own life, would be *prestissimo*.

And I really do not know if the above-mentioned is a virtue or a flaw. I am particularly concerned with that high-tension trial of strength of Héctor Frank with himself. He does not quiet down. He does not search horizontally. He wants to feel the bone in each incision, and that is why he pierces his brushes down to the bottom. Mine, of course, is a friend's remark. Collectors must be happy, since the work of his they purchase will not "resemble" any other bearing his signature. Each piece is a unique adventure. A very earnest game by that eager child he has not ceased to be, the same one who could not be "taught" anything, since he had to learn—catch?—everything by his own effort, from the complex mechanism of a watch to the arrangement of the stars in the firmament.

His seal, however, is more than identifiable. Because Héctor Frank cannot but resemble himself. Everything his eye and hands handle emerges with a highly personal seal. And no matter if the ingredients make us recall Mirò, Basquiat, Dubuffet or our Feijóo. A process of influences emerges here, due more to elective affinities than to the conscious study and synthesis. Coincidence of worlds. Orbits that go into phase. Intuition versus intellection. One and the same

innocence in the face of the always earnest act of creating. Again the well-worn metaphor of God as a baby kneading the universe.

Héctor Frank's works are almost always created from a central anthropomorphic image. Thematic elements, found objects and color planes that, like in naive painters, do not achieve perspective, are gradually added to it. Severe faces amazed of being observed. Minute characters contained in a world of textures and colors from which they do not wish to escape because they are very much at ease in it. They are the background. So it would not be too risky to advance the idea that, to our artist—a man of the Renaissance in full 21st century—the important element is the synergy and not the individual parts. He captures, gives concrete form, does not dissect. More than works in themselves they are works for themselves, with high individual conscience, which do not attempt to represent, nor symbolize, nor suggest, nor allude. They just want to be. Nothing less than that!

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