

Pedro Calapez

ground zero

ground zero covers works produced between 2001 and 2004, with some of them being previously unseen and others created specially for this solo exhibition at the CGAC – Galician Centre of Contemporary Art in Santiago de Compostela.

These are sets of paintings in acrylic on aluminium, of drawings and of watercolours that are grouped on the surface of the wall according to pre-determined layouts, or on the floor, that is, placed horizontally, or structured into shapes showing a sculptural character.

In the exhibition, some of the works took into account a specific relationship with the space and with the architecture of the building, both in the themes dealt with and in their layout and assembly.

digesting and incorporating

Interaction with the architecture of Siza Vieira led my work into the creation of drawings that succinctly describe spaces inside and outside the building and which were later used in some of the works exhibited.

The title of the exhibition, *ground zero*, also intends to show that meeting, that relationship held with the space, the space of the house, the space travelled and looked at, a confrontation with the built space.

The guiding and organising thread was found in the identifying of two different aspects of problems: on the one hand the confrontation of a nucleus of new works in their encounter with the space created by Siza Vieira; on the other hand verifying the relations the works maintain with previous series of works I had done.

Integrating (digesting and incorporating) the references to Santiago, to the art centre, to the building and to the architect generated a working methodology. If on the one hand the architect's technical drawings (in this case by Siza Vieira) had been

manipulated superimposing in transparencies the different blueprints of the building, thus leading to the work *ground zero* (which thus grants a title for this exhibition), on the other hand, views of the building in outline drawing structure the work titled “elevation”. Other paintings were also developed that fill the walls of a room in an organised manner – a room in which its height development is contracted into a bridge that leads to a dead-end door...

It was necessary to understand the possible field of action in which, for example, Siza Vieira or in any other architect references would be a starting point and not a point of arrival.

The starting point for the work is the simulation, on drawing or on painted structures, of the building, whether in its inner or outer spaces or urban surroundings.

What interests me is to start from the built construction in the opposite sense to that of its architectural creation, as if discovering the wandering of the architect’s pencil; that which he, due to the imposition of the programme and the project, cannot do. It is the “deformation” of the gaze on this already built universe that my images appear. From the end to the beginning, from the outer gaze to the intimate and personal form of things. Forgetting the functional aspects. Just seeing the surfaces as if they were standing out against a background. Separating, superimposing the lines that build the walls, mixing the dimensions, deforming the point of view, distorting the visible. Re-drawing the space, copying it and pursuing the inevitable distortions.

transparencies

The idea of transparency emerged in an almost inevitable manner and determined some of the procedural developments in drawing and in painting.

Transparency, a concept that taken in a simple manner presupposes the relating of surfaces that are superimposed and may be seen through each other, from back to front and front to back, equally inducing or being able to contain the concept of the transparent or that which cannot be completely seen but can be glimpsed at, presided over the carrying out of a vast set of drawings. These works were produced on a computer and form an *image bank*, questioning the interaction of inclusion or repulsion

between line and colour (some of these *virtual works*, produced during the summer of 2004, were materialised in an artist book which has already been published by the CGAC. The layout of that book was structured according to a close dialogue with Nuno Faria, and was the result of the encounter between my images and his writings).

passing figures.

Technical drawings are retained of the gaze of the architect (elevations and blueprints). There are also photographic registers, the memory of a gaze on details, the rooms, the opening of the heavens between two walls, the fence around a walkway, the re-entrance into a façade, the emptying out of a window, a glazed balcony, a corner that is compressed into an almost impossible angle, some steps that slow our pace, the light reflected on a ceiling under a table. Shadows are glimpsed, interiors and exteriors superimpose on a unique surface as also do floors and ceilings. Details for a path (in one of the first years of the Fine Arts course, project: to memorise my path from home, drawing, taking photos, walking). I had been walking through the city since my adolescent days, dragging myself up the ups and downs of the narrow streets of old Lisbon, slipping down a wall, repeatedly going through the arch of a door, I spent a long time in the belvederes, thinking about views and sunsets. Looking down. Following a path is a habit; repeating it is a way of being, a vice, and describing it is something impossible.

The walls grow from the floor. Diagram of a blueprint. I find Santiago in this building but I also find other cities; I above all find paths, the act of wandering in space.

And it as if the gaze with which we analyse reality did not show a truth, as reality is unique for each person and is rebuilt in the development of the empathy of the gaze with what is being looked at.

In the desperate search for a place of protection and refuge, a place for stopping: the present sneaks into the cracks of a brain.

territories

Territory of anticipations and deviations: on the work of the architect.

Territory seeking its frontier: on the outline of the interiors.

Territory of the passages: on the relative movement between the gaze and he who gazes.

Territory involved: from the simulacrum of the house, of the façades to the landscape, to the misleading representation.

Territory of the line: in which the project is confused with the whim; where the space is developed throughout a single line.

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September 2004