



ABRIGO DE LUZ **ALEJANDRO CORUJEIRA** con una scintilla di **GIORGIO GRIFFA**

CASE CHIUSE #11
by Paola Clerico

www.casechiuse.net

Case Chiuse HQ presents *Abrigo de Luz*, the first Italian exhibition by Alejandro Corujeira who, in turn, invited Giorgio Griffa to join him.

At the beginning of our dialogue with Corujeira, we asked which Italian artist he particularly admired. Without a moment's hesitation he told us with deep awareness of the work of Giorgio Griffa, who accepted the invitation to participate with a "spark": a canvas of 1970.

Corujeira's abstraction is balanced and deeply pondered. The artist's complex and delicate process engages with pure painting, drawing, literature, poetry, music, numbers, dreams, memory and science.

Combining pencil, graphite, acrylic, watercolour, the artist's sinuous lines undulate and intersect over fields of colour forms and cellular silhouettes. Corujeira fills the canvas through layers of semi-transparent paint, giving geometric forms and colours a weightless nature. With these few elements, his work successfully captures a never-ending sense of rhythmic and palpitating movement, inviting the viewer to live an experience of absolute contemplation.

Case Chiuse by Paola Clerico thanks Cecilia Brunson Projects, London, for the precious collaboration and Archivio Giorgio Griffa, Turin, for the brilliant participation.

Madrid, March 1st, 2021

All the works, with the exception of the drawings, were made during 2020, according to the paradigms of a year that surprised everyone, changing our habits. In this state of carelessness towards life and health I had in mind a verse from Dante that accompanied me during the making of these paintings:

"Or chi sa da qual man la costa cala,
sì che possa salir chi va sanz'ala?"¹

Faced with the uncertainty in which we find ourselves, I asked myself who could be able to overcome and go beyond this moment? How could we enliven painting in these times? And in the same way, how could painting give life to the observer? In this works and through those questions, a vital energy has imposed itself with a new chromatic intensity.

¹ Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy*, Purgatorio, canto III, vv. 52 and 54: "Now who knows from which side the coast [of the mountain] is less steep", said my teacher Virgil stopping his going, "so that even those without wings can arrive at the top?".



I carried on the idea of light that I began to develop in the previous series, thus in a more incisive way. As if painting, beyond the forms, had an impact of light that could embrace us. For me, painting has a subtle force that can "abrigarnos" ² and I try to direct the use of light towards this path.

In my work, literature, poetry and music are sources of inspiration. A group of works may correspond to, or find themselves under the influence of certain readings or musical compositions. Sometimes I look for them with intention to generate in me the predisposition to face particular topics; I think that nowadays painting itself seeks its sources well beyond the line of vision.

*This series, with its transformations, begins at the end of 2017 and is consolidated in 2018 with the group of works that I presented that year at the Bienal de São Paulo. The individual project, selected by the director of the biennial Gabriel Pérez Barreiro, was titled *Al despertar, flotaban* (Upon Awakening, they Floated). The continuity of themes, like the idea of a work in continuous transformation, without interruptions, like a vital thread, or an infinite fabric, is an experience with which I feel akin. *Neumas*, the preceding series, was connected to respiration and emphasized calligraphy. From breathing I moved on to space and light. This allowed me to develop a more intense chromatism.*

The matter I work with, acrylic, watercolour, coloured pencil on a linen support, are materials associated with water, a fluid medium that does not offer resistance and whose structure is tied to transparency. Water thins down the density of the matter and overflows with light.

The idea to invite Giorgio Griffa to participate in the exhibition, in addition to my admiration and interest for his work, is because I feel that an intense brightness burst through his painting as well. In his case, light is dressed with simplicity and presents itself to us in an extremely warm way. I see them as canvases hanging on a wall to give us shelter.

I remember the first impression I had in front of his work, in Madrid in 2010: a strange feeling amid surprise and familiarity. The surprise in front of artworks that I never seen before and that I couldn't instinctively associate with the work of other artists: there was something absolutely unique in his paintings. Familiarity was the result of an immediate encounter with something I felt I could share: the author's careful withdrawal, a humble but at the same time profoundly communicative gesture, a series of works that seemed to be a continuum and, moreover, in a constant motion. In his writings I found more ideas that coincide with my thoughts. Among others, the feeling that the observed object is modified in the very act of observation, or the close relationship between painting and literature.

Alejandro Corujeira

² from "abrigo": shelter us, defend us, envelop us, protect us.



ALEJANDRO CORUJEIRA (Buenos Aires, 1961) studied at the School of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires before moving to Madrid in 1991. His work has been exhibited in museums across Latin America and Europe, including at the 33 Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2018), Fundación Caja de Burgos, Burgos (2017), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2002), Centro de España en Buenos Aires (2005). His works are included in important collections and public institutions such as: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (MAMBA), Argentina; Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York; Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas; Colección Unión Fenosa, La Coruña, Spain; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Panamá, Panama; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Ímber (MACCSI), Caracas, Venezuela; Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno (IVAM), Valencia, Spain; Academia Española de Historia, Arqueología y Bellas Artes, Rome.

GIORGIO GRIFFA (Turin, 1936) in 1969 begins his collaboration with the Sperone gallery in Turin and in 1970 he exhibits in the galleries of Ileana Sonnabend, in New York and Paris, and in those years he meets the artists of Arte Povera. Among the many personal exhibitions in important institutions, we mention those at the Camden Arts Center in London, Fundação de Serralves in Porto, Fondation Vincent Van Gogh in Arles, Center d'Art Contemporain in Geneva, MACRO in Rome, Museo della Permanente in Milan, GAM in Turin and the Kunstverein in Braunschweig. Among the numerous group exhibitions, we remember those at the Castello di Rivoli, GAMeC in Bergamo, Kunsthaus in Zurich, MART in Rovereto, French Academy in Rome, Kunstverein in Frankfurt, Museo de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro, Museum Boymans in Rotterdam, Internationaal Culturell Centrum in Antwerp, Museum of Philadelphia Civic Center, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Städtische Kunsthalle in Düsseldorf. He participated in international exhibitions: Venice Biennale (2017, 1980, 1978), Rome Quadriennale (1999, 1986) and San Paolo Biennale (1977). His works are part of important public collections such as: Castello di Rivoli, Turin; Tate, London; Museo del Novecento, Milan; Gallerie d'Italia - Piazza Scala, Milan; MACRO, Rome; Cantonal Art Museum, Lugano; Dallas Museum of Art; Fundacao de Serralves, Porto.

