

## **OPENING WINDOWS OVER DISPLAYED OBJECTS** by Miguel Fernández-Cid

João Mouro (Faro 1985) has chosen one of most difficult ways to work: to start from materials whose origins we identify as fragments of aesthetic and functional objects, to elaborate with them object-sculptures that offer us at a time reality and impossibility and doing that from an intermediate scale far beyond the evocation or the monument. This scale separates him from the heirs of historic collage as well as from the constructive sculpture of the 70s and 80s, while his method when constructing his pieces reveals him as inquisitive, intuitive and solitary.

Taking into account those materials he starts from it would be customary to propose sculptures settled on a strong constructive character, small evocative pieces, proposals based on reflecting a symbolic content or energy situations. However, João Mouro, seems to be determined to let us see the planning, the process and the result, without hiding anything, even inviting the spectator's curiosity to discover the secret side, the mystery concealed in each piece. His action as a sculptor consists of not only constructing or arranging an object but also displaying it into the space and opening it in order to endow it with dynamism. His most habitual manner is to extend and divide up spaces so to set up windows by which to make the object alive from an ironic mood that has a lot to do with post-dadaism. With a nearly caustic sense of humour he calls it *windowism*, a clear wink at that spirit in the vanguards when they knew how to be both collective and solitary.

His works deal with going and coming back, with inquiry, with encounter. With all that and with those plastic values which is the same as saying that it has to do with the dialogue between the rhythm of work and an educated eye. And in the dispute - as he never hides or disguises the process - the sculptor prefers to be on the side of the one that elaborates as if he would only accompany the autonomous development of each piece of work.

Individually regarded, his sculptures have some of the severity of portraits, fine-tuned by features more characteristic of the illustration language. And nearly all of them behave as scale models due to their architectural vocation, even urban and utopian. Taking this situation as a starting point is not at all easy: there is a risk to let oneself go too far through one of these routes. It is surprising the manner that works move themselves among surprise, double meaning, humour, functionality, irony and the use of textures typical of those fragments by which they are made up and still they hold a ground where any false balance can be perceived.

It is not easy to know how to stop in such a case and that's the point where an attentive watch is the base where an intuitive artist must rely on. João Moura knows that his pieces are autonomous buildings, that they have their structure of origin and the versatility of being living spaces although they coexist in cities where uniformity is not sought. Wise echoes of modernist architecture of the 50s become visible, revising art- decó solutions though all that is suggested from an either radical or naked contemporary action.

Lucid and agile when using plastic resources or solutions concerned with utopian architecture or living urban development, his performance may seem disordered just in appearance, the way he makes his works of art grow up - pretending to be

knocking planes down in those that have a more visible functional origin or either breaking the idea of stability and symmetry - can be considered as some of his most

attractive and distinctive features. The method used to exploit textures and colour of reused materials, the way he opens spaces, creates changes in perception or provides his works with an interior and dynamic light, his insistence on suggesting viewpoints, on encouraging the spectator's curiosity or his constant appeal to ordinariness or even domesticity are manners to show that the work of art always centres on a workshop that is, at the same time, a daily, domestic and nearly intimate space This provides his works with a sensation of inhabited sculptures, of sceneries in which life goes by.

The option chosen by João Moura is not an easy one and it's even less simple to create a discourse as attractive as his most recent works where the seduction posed by the anonymous, almost manual, fanciful architectural forms that respond not only to the environment but also to the materials used, can be guessed.

That is the order that determines his sculptures to which he allows to grow up in a situation of mystery, of ironic restlessness.

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João Moura

Born in 1985 in Faro, Portugal

2009: He graduated at the Fine Arts School, Lisbon University

2008: Erasmus Scholarship at the Accademia di Belli Arti di Brera, Milan, Italy

After a series of exhibitions in Portugal and at the Patrick Lancz Art Gallery in Brussels, Belgium, he arrives in Madrid where his 1<sup>st</sup> exhibition, titled "Ventanismos" takes place at Astarté Art Gallery.