





To sculpt from within, to sculpt from without. I think it is a joy to be able to work from those two states. To make a spot, to make space, to empty. Action and movement begin to grow, functioning as layers that add up. Layers of gestures working as hollowing layers. I think about this buildup of shapes, which stem from the action of movement and the decision you made long ago to work with matter that is more expansive than contained. About how, to work with this matter –be it sand, be it straw– there needs to be a process of restraint that eventually allows it to take shape. But this restraint is not so much an exercise of control as it is, above all, a way of understanding.

There is a previous understanding of the bales of straw. This comes from a desire of perceiving how what we usually use in different ways and different places has the power to be, in different states, an element of conversation, shape, and strength. Understanding can, in time, be an exchange. First, there is a tuning, you tune in with the material and understand its behaviour: how it contracts, how it solidifies, how it is preserved, and how it can be related to other matters.

When you started working with straw, you had been working with sand. At first, I struggled to understand how you made the artworks. A fine surface, filled with particles and grains, that stands on its own without crumbling, a shape that contains movement. It was when I saw the pictures of the process –you, standing on top on the sand, pressuring, angling– that I understood. The work with the bales of straw came later, but I was not surprised that you chose that material. During the process, you try to transfer the qualities of concrete to the straw. Square fragments, blocks, and bars, as first elements, and a torsion.

A lot of strength here too. There is also a study of the sculptural image, of posture, of turning, angling, pressuring. And, at the same time, you continue working with sand, with a feeling of pulling and transferring. From eye to head to image, and from material to movement.

You gather images from Greek laying sculptures, from Roman copies, and from other periods in Art History. Is the sum of images a trigger for you? A trigger to take action, and, at the same time, an escape? An image made out of many images. Are the gesture and the tension foot-hip-torso-head the ones which bind them, assemble them? I think of an image, of a torsion via accumulation. A movement that is dragged by gesture. And now, with María at the workshop, you two working in parallel, each of you holding an image for reference, which begins to transform. Is the image abandoned through action?

To work from a known place but knowing that it will move to a different point. That's what's happening a little, right? You are beginning to understand the technique needed to work with straw. But it is a process that lacks many references and examples. That is why you have been making and defining a series of procedures, adapting them. Your own technique, which allows you to think, to build, to connect. And, for these pieces, you have translated a mechanism close to the trade and previous to the machine, translating as a way of making?

You have also incorporated advice and ideas from other artists: the boxes, the height, the pressure, the jack, the tiger saw. I am under the impression that you have been stretching the process in different ways and intensities.

And that, in this understanding of the process of making, which goes through a burst of desire and image, through the contingency of the material and its manipulation, there is always something unexpected. There are spots where the reference image is forgotten and other paths are opened. As I was saying before, this happens partially because of Marías' work: there is a connection, but there is not a lot of previous joint decision-making. You don't let go, together. Not only the image is abandoned through the action of adding new image-movements, but also the replica is lost. Once you follow the gesture, work on the piece, and take a step back to look at it.

How is it for you, when you work on many pieces simultaneously? A multitude at once, the intensity intact. Practically all the artworks are at the same stage, the timelines are so close they could all be talking to each other, as if there was a three-way conversation. Each of the artworks corresponding to a different image and a different vibration. No two bales are alike, even though they have been made by the same process: each of them has a different contingency, the colour changes with the humidity, sprouts appear by surprise. I think about how it must feel to move from one piece to another during the process, how do the surfaces mix with each other?

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