

Maurizio VITTA, "Juan Martínez Moro", *l'ARCA. The international magazine of architecture, design and visual communication*, Milano, February 2006, pp. 80-85

Juan Martínez Moro's work will inevitably pose more questions than provide answers. Its intrinsic beauty is destined to be more disturbing than heart-warming. It will be claimed that this is basically due to Moro's years of relentless experimentation into the art of graphics, moving on from the intense aquatints of his early period to subsequent research into objects before eventually achieving his latest results, in which conventional etching techniques are matched up against cutting-edge digital and photographic methods. But we can only really clarify the conceptual groundings of this artist from Santander if we first look at his philosophical background, his studies into aesthetics and the history of art, and his thoughts about the status of image.

Moro's research is actually carried out on two different but interacting fronts, thanks to which the canons of organising reason end up identifying with those of pure sensibility. The resulting balance inevitably turns out to be unstable: for a second it grasps the truth of things, briefly lighting it up before suddenly descending into the depths of uncertainty, contradiction and fragmentation of phenomena.

How art and knowledge are related is actually one of the keys to Moro's work, studied in its deepest core, setting it out in all its endless facets and making graphic art not so much an object of critical analysis or the bearer of absolute meanings, but an attractor of all kinds of *tensión* constantly activated by the way thought and perception, design and intuition, coincide. The complexity of his works is, therefore, the result of this approach, not its premise. This is proved by the weave of modernity and tradition, which the use of both very old and recent materials translates into artefacts and which all the tangents with the history of art underline on a stylistic level.

This produces these twisting, maze-like images in which reality does not unfold in the artifice of refraction, which would reduce it to a mere play of perspective, but rather in a clear mirroring of its own multiplicity.

This also explains why his work mainly features ordinary objects, architectural features, pieces of furniture, trees and "things" from our everyday life, which are all ready to come out of the background, incessantly decomposing and then recomposing before our very eyes, like puzzles with endless solutions.

On the face of the things, this constantly moving and disconcerting point of view might appear to evoke surrealism and, above all, Magritte's work. But Moro goes even further and actually ventures into the sublime ambiguity of Baroque art —evoked in recent works by an explicit reference to “folds”— a more than modern-day key of interpretation. In this way artistic thinking flows over into philosophical thought, and the art world is once again a “living world” in which phenomenological thinking has revealed eloquent indeterminacy.

But these very latest works by Juan Moro actually open up even further to reveal even greater possibilities. Here, indeed, attention seems imperceptibly to move on from a volumetric images of objects to their spatial features: as “things” unfold, space —which is no longer the pictorial space of his early etchings, nor the geometric space of later works— abandons the Euclidean values of homogeneity and commensurability to spread out in all directions in a fullness that dissolves any sense of stable physiognomy. Here again Moro's work patiently stitches back together the bonds between history and the future: the space of science, architecture and modern-day society takes on the design figure of primeval chaos, which, at least for a moment, finds intelligible form in its images.