

Grounded in the proposition of continuing to address the diverse questions affecting emerging art, for its 2022 programme the Espai 13 of the Fundació Joan Miró presents *Dive and Immersion*, an exhibition series curated by Pere Llobera, with artistic proposals by Victor Jaenada, Marcel Rubio Juliana, Marria Pratts and Martín Vitaliti.

The series takes its name from the free translation by José Ángel Valente of the poem "Il tuffatore", by Eugenio Montale, which was inspired by the fifth-century BC funerary painting found in the necropolis at Paestum. Both the poem and the painting, where we see a young man diving head first into the water, reflect on life, death and the circularity inherent in both.

Cut through by this tragic yet lucid vision of life, the exhibitions of Victor Jaenada, Marcel Rubio Juliana, Marria Pratts and Martín Vitaliti reflect on these artists' massively radical commitment to their work. All four of them, in their condition of what Pere Llobera calls "natural painters", use installations, artefacts and stubbornly pictorial gestures to address the irreducible need to find our own voice within existence.

#ImmersióEspai13

Fundació Joan Miró ✱ J.F... Barcelona

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Forthcoming exhibitions:

Marria Pratts
1 Possession Drift
15.07.22 — 16.10.22

Martín Vitaliti
Silly Symphony
28.10.22 — 15.01.23

Design: Seranta

✱ J.F... Espai 13

Dive



MARCEL RUBIO JULIANA — The Resurrection
29.04.22 — 03.07.22

Exhibition series curated by Pere Llobera

Immersion

Fundació Joan Miró ✱ J.F... Barcelona

Blake watched the advent of industrial society – the dark satanic mills – with the horror of one witnessing a catastrophe of a magnitude so great it can only be understood as the expression of a spiritual hecatomb.¹

Enrique Caracciolo Trejo

In each and every one of the conversations I have had with Marcel Rubio Juliana over the course of this curatorial experience, I have had the impression that reality disappoints and alarms him in a way very similar to how William Blake felt threatened by progress; or how Walter Benjamin could feel when he set down in black and white the famous disquiet of the *Angelus Novus*, in which an angel of the future gives up struggling against the winds of progress and can only look back with resignation. I do not know for sure if it is this wish to evade current reality that has led Rubio Juliana to the subject of THE RESURRECTION, but whatever it was that triggered this exhibition, what you will find in the gallery space is an itinerary that takes in all the stages of the transformation of the body after death till it reaches the final stage of sublimation into soul. An equivocal festival of bodies, I have to say, because in fact they have become the allegory of a metamorphosis; the chrysalis of a state of mind wounded and longing for a better fate. The artist himself sheds light on this in a very precise way, stating:

‘Resurrection – that is to say, rebirth, an action that takes place in the spiritual realm – is a word that spans the very broad field of the sacred tradition and involves passing from non-existence to re-existence. In order to make an aspect that is by its very nature unrepresentable representable, it needs to be addressed edgewise, from the side from which it can be viewed. Alchemy bequeathed us, together with the hermetic tradition, a highly suggestive cosmogony suited to depicting this mystery. I have based myself on the workings of alchemy, point by point, precisely because the two principles with which it operates, the spiritualisation of matter and the materialisation of the spirit, are closely interconnected. A science founded on quantitative analyses, relegating the spirit to the realm of thought, must necessarily be blind to the endless changing iridescences of life. This explains why in ancient times science and art were synonymous with the same research, with a common interest that remained perfectly valid until the schism between them, serving science for the exploration and exploitation of a universe that had become material – in the opaque sense of the term – and art as an isolated stronghold of an aesthetic exploration, in the world of forms, that had become solipsistic.’

Many things have taken place over the course of this exhibition. To conclude this essay, I shall go back to one that occurred early on and which is in keeping with the Thanatos inherent in the display. I am talking about the small painting made for Rubio Juliana’s mother in which a large fly rests on a candelabrum that makes one think, laterally, of a strange poem that William Blake wrote about Sir Joshua Reynolds on the day Reynolds died. In the twisted poem, wax and tears of grief mix like bad varnish incapable of preserving images. Rubio Juliana himself revealed to me that wax is implicit in the candelabrum in his mother’s painting (which Martina Millà and I marvelled at during one of the very first visits to the artist’s studio) and that the fly is perhaps the perfect allegory of death. I do not know why I am so set upon ending this text with this poem. The death of the painter and painting turned physiology? The terrifying speed with which images pass before our eyes? It makes no odds. I have learned over the years that not everything needs an explanation. It also turns out that the explanations given by Marcel Rubio Juliana are good enough. So without further ado: welcome to this transit.

*WHEN Sir Joshua Reynolds died
All nature was degraded;
The King dropp’d a tear into the Queen’s ear,
And all his pictures faded.*

Pere Llobera

Marcel Rubio Juliana (Barcelona, 27 April 1991) studied at Pau Gargallo School of Art and Design, where he graduated in 2007. He later studied the Fine Arts Degree at Universitat de Barcelona. Since then, he has shown his work in the following exhibitions: *Hieros Logos* (2021), openstudio curated by Margot Cuevas and *El retorn a Ripollet* [Art Nou price 2020], Galeria Joan Prats, Barcelona; *Surfeit* (2018), Fundació Arranz-Bravo, l’Hospitalet de Llobregat; *Swab* (2016), represented by Passatge Studio gallery, Barcelona; *Els músculs de Zaratustra* (2016), with

the writer Victor Balcells Matas, Passatge Studio, Barcelona; *Pasajes* (2016), La Puntual de Mercantí, Sant Cugat del Vallès. He has collaborated in various publications and has been nominated for different awards, such as the Biennal Torres García – Ciutat de Mataró, with the work *Espectre* (2016); the Ynglada-Guillot Drawing Prize, with the work *Geschlagen* (2015), exhibited at Espai Volart, Barcelona; the Fundació Güell Drawing Prize, exhibited in Palau Güell, Barcelona (2015-2016); the Biennial d’Art / Tapiró Painting Prize, Tarragona, with the drawing *What time is it?* (2013).

1. Prologue to: William Blake, *Antología bilingüe*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1987